

Hafa Adai!

Guam Guard and NMI relationship 'solid and promising.' **PAGE 2**  
Babauta, Vargas are NM Tech's 2022 top employees. **PAGE 3**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune



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CNMI Division of Customs and Biosecurity director Jose C. Mafnas, third from left, tells during a news briefing yesterday how Customs officers intercepted 1,048 grams (2.13 lbs) of crystal methamphetamine or "ice" from a package at the U.S. Postal Service in Chalan Kanoa last Thursday. Also in the press briefing, from left, are Customs planner and public information officer Reina C. Camacho, Department of Public Safety assistant chief of police Lawrence Camacho, and acting Department of Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita. Inset shows the seized package.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

# \$314K worth of 'ice' seized

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
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**C**NMI Customs officers have arrested a man who allegedly picked up a package containing 1,048 grams of crystal methamphetamine or "ice" with a total street value of \$314,400, at the U.S. Postal Service in Chalan Kanoa last Thursday.

At a press conference yesterday, CNMI Customs Bio-diversity director Jose C. Mafnas said a Chinese male national who tried to pick up

See \$314K on Page 4



Crystal Methamphetamine,  
1048 grams (2.13 lbs)  
26 January 2023,  
CK Post Office

## 'I was expecting sausages, not drugs'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The man who was arrested last Thursday for retrieving a package at the U.S. Post Office that contained crystal methamphetamine is now claiming that he was actually expecting a package of sausages in the mail, not drugs.

The suspect, Li Bing, is facing charges of possession with intent to distribute a

controlled substance (methamphetamine) in the U.S. District Court for the NMI. He is accused of possession with intent to distribute 1048 gross grams of "meth," which was seized by the CNMI Customs and Biosecurity at the U.S. Postal Service office last Thursday.

Last Friday, a complaint was brought before District Court for the NMI Magistrate

See SUSPECT on Page 4

## PUA program extended to June 2024

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES  
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REPORTER

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program has been extended another year—to June 2024, according to acting Labor secretary Leila Staffler.



Staffler

This does not mean, however, that applications can still be submitted.

PUA has been granted an extension until June 2024 so we

See PUA on Page 4

## Hawaii man imprisoned for 1991 murder, rape released

**HONOLULU** (AP)—A judge on Tuesday last week ordered a man released from prison immediately after his attorneys presented new evidence and argued that he didn't commit the crimes he was convicted of and spent more than 20 years locked up

for: the 1991 murder, kidnapping and sexual assault of a

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Albert "Ian" Schweitzer, left, hugs his mother, Linda, moments after a judge ordered him released from prison, in Hilo, Hawaii, Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023.



## INSIDE



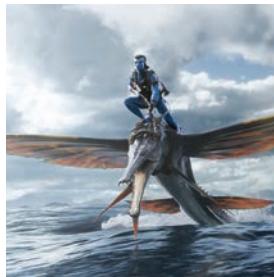
**WORLD**  
A New Zealand scientist and another is killed in Ukraine while helping evacuate people.

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**OVERDRIVE**  
For 2023, the Mazda CX-5 crossover hasn't changed, except for a white paint option—and that's good.

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**LIFE & STYLE**  
"Avatar" claimed the No. 1 spot on the box office charts for the seventh weekend in a row.

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# Local

LEIGH GASES  
Maj. Gen. Esther Aguigui, Adjutant General of the Guam Army National Guard, administers the oath for Vincent Taitano, in navy blue, and Jose Quitano on Sunday at the Commissioner Joaquin S. Tudela Community Park in San Vicente.

## Guam Guard and NMI relationship 'solid and promising'

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The relationship of the Guam Army National Guard and the CNMI is "solid and promising," according to Maj. Gen. Esther Aguigui, Adjutant General of the Guam Army National Guard, soon after two of Saipan's sons officially took their oaths as Guard members last Sunday at the Commissioner Joaquin S. Tudela Community Park in San Vicente.

With no CNMI Guard of its own, Aguigui said it's promising for the youth of the CNMI, especially for those looking for not only a job but a career, to join the nearby Guam Army National Guard, and that the relationship between Guam and the NMI "has always been very solid, and we are trying to reinvigorate a recruiting platform that we actually started back in 2013."

There were challenges like the hefty price of traveling back and forth that the Guard encountered along the way that stalled recruiting efforts for a while, "but then we figured, 'What a perfect time to come back and revisit this whole platform of recruiting in the CNMI,'" she said during Sunday's "Adopt-A-Place" event in which the Guard committed to maintaining the community park in San Vicente.

She added that they want to provide opportunities for those who don't have opportunities for jobs in the private or government sector. "We want to open up the possibility of having a military career that will lead to a retirement that will lead to economic prosperity, that will lead to family stability. We want that for the next greatest generation."

In the military, she said a soldier can come into it knowing that 20 years down the line, they're going to get something out of it. "In those 20 years, you're going to come up with a specific skillset—not one, sometimes you get two, sometimes you even get three. So when you have those skillsets, you become very marketable. ... You still get to keep your civilian job, but then you'll be

earning points toward a military retirement and then you get benefits."

"I think the youth and their families are very excited about this opportunity because I know the CNMI, just like Guam, we're family-oriented and our families care about what happens to us. But what a perfect way to serve in the military by serving at home—and the Guam National Guard allows soldiers that opportunity. You're going to leave for a little bit because you have to go to training and you have to master your skills, but after that, you come back home and you serve right here at home," she said.

Aguigui added that some members of their popular Guam Army National Guard band come from the CNMI and that the Guard is already doing outreach in high schools.

She said that it's a blessing to be working with Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho, and that these efforts actually started with then-mayor David M. Apatang, who is now the lieutenant governor.

In a presentation during last Friday's fiscal year 2023 Annual Planning Training and Integration Meeting, it was said that there are currently 14 Guardsmen and women from the CNMI and that number is steadily increasing.

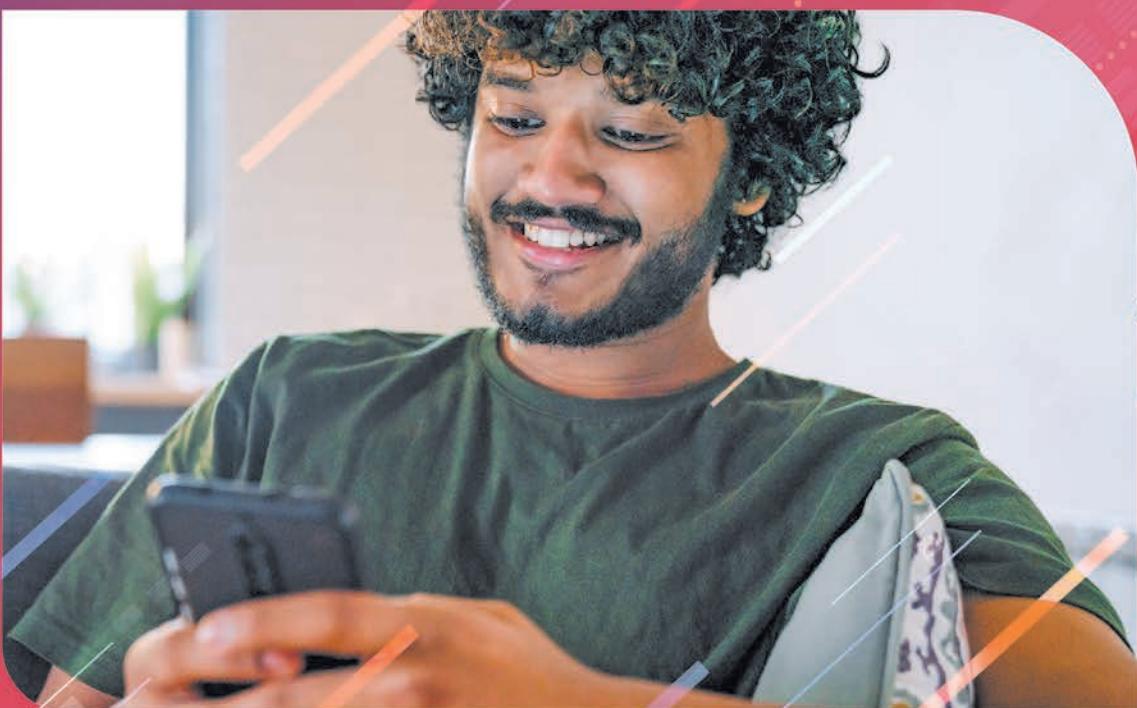
Jose Quitano, a 23-year-old transit operator with the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority, said after his oath-taking that he is excited to leave but that he is already used to being away from home due to off island training. He said he joined the military because his great-grandfather, for whom he was named after, was in the military and he wanted to emulate him.

Vincent Taitano, a 29-year-old CNMI Board of Parole staff, said the feeling of officially being enlisted is "overwhelming, but I love the fact that there's something new for me, learning that I can grow into better things." He said that his daughter is his reason for joining the Guard.

To learn more about the Guam Army National Guard, visit [www.gu.ng.mil/](http://www.gu.ng.mil/).

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# Babauta, Vargas are NM Tech's 2022 top employees

By LEIGH GASES

leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com

REPORTER

Northern Marianas Technical Institute's marketing and outreach coordinator Benjamin Babauta and construction instructor Eugenio "Mike" Vargas have both been recognized as NM Tech's 2022 Employees of the Year.

NM Tech, an educational institute in the CNMI that fosters the professional growth and development of individuals who have an interest in the technical and trades fields, recognized Babauta and Vargas last Dec. 22 at their holiday appreciation party.

Babauta has worked at NM Tech for seven years where he got started as a part-time culinary arts instructor. He helped revamp the culinary program alongside chef Inas Hocog and former instructor Tyrell Pauling.

When NM Tech transitioned into a government entity and re-opened in June 2021, Ba-



From left, Benjamin Babauta and Eugenio "Mike" Vargas are joined by Jodina Attao, chief executive officer of NM Tech.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

bauta became a full-time instructor for Culinary Arts, then moved into Marketing and Outreach in December 2021 as NM Tech worked to build its capacity.

"Benjamin is a huge asset to the NM Tech team. He is vi-

brant, full of energy, and truly advocates for the school and its mission," said NM Tech chief executive officer Jodina Attao. "Thank you for this recognition. ...[The year] 2022 has been a great year for NM Tech and I was happy to use my skills and abilities in a new work setting to execute big projects for NM Tech. I just try to do my best daily," said Babauta.

Vargas, who is more popularly known at NM Tech as "Mr. Mike," has worked at NM Tech for 11 years as a con-

struction instructor. Before becoming an instructor, Vargas had his own construction business here on Saipan.

"He has skills and talents that he passes on to his students on a daily basis. He is always willing to serve NM Tech and contribute to any and all projects. He is a great team player, advisor, and educator. We are blessed to work with such amazing people," said Attao.

Vargas is thankful that the effort he pours into the school is being noticed. "I'm thankful for that. I will continue to work

hard and this award motivates me to do more in the coming year. I think we have a great team here at NM Tech, along with great captains," said.

"Both chef Ben and Mr.

Mike are phenomenal people and play critical roles at NM Tech. We are grateful for their service and look forward to the many accomplishments to come," said Attao.

## 5.0-magnitude earthquake near Guam

At 3:02pm on Jan. 28 2023, a report of a 5.0-magnitude earthquake occurred 82 kilometers east-southeast of Yigo village in Guam. Currently, no tsunami warnings

or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. (PR)

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**HAWAII***From Page 1*

woman visiting Hawaii.

Albert "Ian" Schweitzer, who was convicted in 2000 and sentenced to 130 years in prison, should be "released from his shackles immediately," Judge Peter Kubota ruled.

That prompted applause in the Hilo courtroom and hugs for Schweitzer, who was flown to the Big Island for the hearing from the Arizona prison where he was serving his sentence.

"My feelings were all over the place," Schweitzer told the AP during a phone interview in recalling the moment of his release. "Nerves, anxiety, scared."

The justice system is "flawed," he said, calling himself one of many imprisoned for crimes they didn't commit. He earlier told reporters that he was "grateful" for the judge doing the "honorable thing."

A petition filed late Monday outlined additional evidence in one of Hawaii's biggest murders, which unfolded on Christmas Eve in 1991 on the Big Island.

Dana Ireland, 23, was found barely alive in the bushes along a fishing trail in Puna, a remote section of the island. She had been sexually assaulted and beaten, and later died at Hilo Medical Center. The mangled bicycle she had been riding was found several miles away and appeared to have been run into by a vehicle.

The slaying of the blond-haired, blue-eyed visitor from Virginia gained national attention and remained unsolved for years, putting intense pressure on police to find the killer.

"Whenever you have a white, female victim ... it gets a lot more attention than people of color and Native Hawaiians," said Kenneth Lawson, co-director of the Hawaii Innocence Project. "The parents, understandably, were becoming more and more

infuriated. ... There was insurmountable pressure to solve this case. And when that happens, mistakes are made. Some intentional and some unintentional."

Ireland's relatives couldn't immediately be reached for comment on the petition and Schweitzer's release. Prosecutors didn't immediately comment on Schweitzer's release.

With help from the Innocence Project in New York, the co-counsel in the case, Lawson's group represented Schweitzer, the last of three Native Hawaiian men convicted in Ireland's death who had remained imprisoned.

DNA evidence previously submitted in the case belonged to an unknown man and all three of the convicted men were excluded as sources.

New DNA evidence, according to the petition, shows a "Jimmy Z" brand T-shirt found near Ireland and soaked with her blood belonged to the same unknown man, and not to one of the three men, as prosecutors claimed.

Additionally, a new tire tread analysis concluded Schweitzer's Volkswagen Beetle car didn't leave the tire marks at either location where Ireland and her bicycle were found. A forensic odontologist also concluded an injury on her left breast wasn't a bitmark, as previously believed, the petition said.

"At a new trial today, a jury would not convict Mr. Schweitzer of Ms. Ireland's sexual assault and murder," the petition said. "In fact, a prosecutor would likely not even arrest Mr. Schweitzer for this crime."

The likelihood that all three men participated in a sexual attack and left no trace of biological evidence—including a lack of evidence uncovered with advanced forensic testing—is "extraordinarily improbable," the petition said.

In 2019, Schweitzer's attorneys and Hawaii County prosecutors entered into a "conviction integrity

agreement" to reinvestigate the case. It was the first time in Hawaii there has been this type of agreement, Lawson said, which is increasingly being used to reexamine questionable convictions and guard against future errors.

"Over the last three years, we have shared information and re-examined forensic evidence. No matter the outcome in these post-conviction proceedings, we remain committed to identifying unknown male #1 and seeking justice for Dana Ireland and her 'ohana," Hawaii County Prosecuting Attorney Kelden Waltjen said in a statement before the ruling, using the Hawaiian word for "family."

However, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Shannon Kagawa asked the judge to deny the petition, saying the new evidence wouldn't change the outcome of a new trial.

Kubota disagreed, saying that based on the new evidence, a jury would acquit Schweitzer.

Much of the background on the Ireland case is detailed in a document filed with the petition listing facts that defense attorneys and prosecutors have stipulated.

In 1994, police made what they believed to be a major breakthrough. A man facing charges for his role in a cocaine conspiracy contacted police and claimed his half-brother, Frank Pauline Jr., witnessed Ireland's attack, according to the stipulated facts document.

Police interviewed Pauline, who was in his third month of a 10-year sentence for an unrelated sex assault and theft. He claimed brothers Ian and Shawn Schweitzer attacked and killed Ireland. But he was interviewed at least seven times and gave inconsistent accounts each time, eventually incriminating himself, the stipulation document said.

Despite the lack of evidence linking them to the killing, the two Schweitzers and Pauline were indicted in 1997.

U.S. Postal Service, and the U.S. Postal Inspector Service for assisting them in this matter.

Mafnas said it was a routine inspection for Customs officers at the post office on all packages going out both for tax purposes and enforcement. "And so when this person was called in to the table for inspection, that's when the officers discovered these drugs," he said.

Mafnas said the 2.2 lbs of "ice," along with four other lbs of "ice" that were also seized recently by Customs officers, were given to DEA to be sent to an off-island laboratory for further testing.

Mafnas said the final targeted destination of the "ice" that was seized Thursday is the CNMI, where it is the drug of choice on the islands.

"I hope we can stop [the smuggling] and have all the users treated or cured so the demand for these dangerous drugs is over or ceased. Right now, it's still a drug of choice," he said.

Mafnas said they are vigilant and still building capacities to ensure that CNMI borders—airports and seaports, and post office—are safe.

"We try our very best to prevent these drugs or any contraband from entering the CNMI," he said.

He said he is grateful and appreciates the assistance of DPS, DEA, the

At one point the charges were dismissed because all three men were excluded as the source of semen found in Ireland and on a hospital gurney sheet. They were indicted again after another informant claimed Ian Schweitzer confessed to him in jail that Pauline raped and killed Ireland.

Pauline later said he offered details to police about the Ireland murder in order to get drug charges dropped against his half-brother.

In a prison interview with the A&E show "American Justice," Pauline compared his story to the tale of the boy who cried wolf. "Wasn't me," he said in a strong Hawaii Pidgin accent.

**PUA***From Page 1*

will continue pay outs for eligible claimants up until the last person has received payment," she said.

Staffler stated that, as of press time, a total of 2,500 individuals are still awaiting benefits.

"There is a total of about 2,500 people waiting. About 1,000 are still awaiting adjudication and 1,500 are waiting on the benefit payment control so this could be because of overpayment decisions made in the past," she said.

Despite this, Staffler assures the community that the funds remain with DOL and they will make sure that everyone who is eligible will get their benefits.

"I don't have the exact [amount] but the remaining balance is there. I can assure everyone that that money was not touched by the former administration. The PUA money is there, I have made sure with my team. I want to give everyone hope that we are going to continue to process these claims and applications until we've gone through them all. Everyone who is waiting will be addressed," Staffler said.

She is also asking for the community's patience as another delay is expected with the program's upcoming relocation.

"With all the issues with [the

But when he started telling the truth, he said no one believed him.

Shawn Schweitzer took a deal to plead guilty to manslaughter and kidnapping—and receive credit for about a year served and five years of probation—after seeing juries convict Pauline and his brother in 2000.

In October, Shawn Schweitzer met with prosecutors and recanted. According to the stipulation document, he pleaded guilty because his "parents did not want to risk losing another son and encouraged Shawn Schweitzer to do what he needed to do to come home and not suffer the same fate as his brother."

American Rescue Plan Act], we are in the process of relocating so that we can save money on rent. So there will be a short pause in processing. It will be a couple of days so we can ensure we are moving everything critically," she said.

Staffler noted that since taking over the program earlier this month, she has come to understand the program and now understands what caused the delay in payouts earlier on

"I can definitely say that the program has had a growing team and they have done an excellent job of looking at how to correct many of the issues people have been complaining about. There was a lot of issues with maintaining active personnel in the early stages of the program. It was very hard for PUA as it was limited employment and adjudicators had to be renewed every three months. It was not a long-term job, so a lot of people resigned. So there were a lot of cracks and documents got lost. Also, when adjudicators resign, you're essentially losing their knowledge of particular cases, so whoever takes up that case next needs to start from the very beginning. It's a really arduous process. That was where a lot of the delays were seen and it made a lot of people upset. But when I came in and got to see why things are the way they are, I can fully understand both sides and why there was a lot of hardships," she stated.

**SUSPECT***From Page 1*

Judge Heather Kennedy against Li. According to the complaint, during a routine inspection at the U.S. Postal Service office in Chalan Kanoa last Jan. 26, Customs officers opened a package addressed to Li and in plain view was a white crystalized substance that later tested positive for methamphetamine.

Following the inspection, Li was arrested and brought to the Drug Enforcement Administration office for further investigation.

At the DEA's office, federal DEA investigators interviewed Li about the package. According to Li, at around 11am on Jan. 26, he received a call from the USPS Office informing him he had a package that was ready for pick-up.

When he went to pick up the package, Li said he gave it to Customs officers, who opened it and found the crystalized substance, after which he was transported to the DEA.

Li told the investigators that he was not expecting a package, he did not know who sent it, and he did not know what the contents of the package was. He added that he had never been to the post office and that it was his first time.

However, investigators informed Li that Customs officers posted at the post office claimed to have seen him there about three weeks prior, to which Li replied he went to check if his package of sausages had arrived. This concluded the initial interview.

A few moments later, Li allegedly spoke with investigators again, claiming that he lied about the sausages.

He then allegedly stated that, back in December 2022, he was added to a social media chat group where he was instructed to send a photo of his passport and phone number and he would be expecting a package that he should not open. Li said he was told that after picking up the package and sending a photo, he would be sent a good amount of money.

**\$314K***From Page 1*

the package and admitted to being its recipient was arrested and that local and federal law enforcers are investigating further.

Mafnas said that Customs officers discovered during a routine inspection at the U.S. Postal Service last Thursday 1,048 grams or 2.2 lbs of crystal methamphetamine that was rolled in a towel and concealed in a package.

He said the suspect, a male Chinese national in his mid-40s, was there to pick up the package and immediately arrested after the discovery of the "ice."

Mafnas said he does not have more information about the suspect, aside from saying that the package had just come from California.

Acting Finance secretary Tracy B. Norita, who was also present at the news briefing at the Customs Biosecurity office at the seaport, praised the Division of Customs and their partners with the Department of Public Safety and Drug Enforcement Administration for a "job well done."

"Drugs that enter our ports end up

# HSEM undergo infrastructure risk management training

The CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management and other local government agencies took part in a training last Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023, that identifies critical infrastructure sectors that may be at risk and develops strategies that can lessen the

impacts on a community.

The training, called the 2023 Critical Infrastructure Risk Management Training, was organized and conducted by Peter Lofgren and Scott Cubbler of Texas A&M Engineering Extension Services at the Napu Room of the Pa-

cific Island Club Saipan.

The course provided participants supplementary and advanced training to assist local emergency responders and stakeholders in identifying critical infrastructure sectors that may be at risk and developing mitigation

strategies. It works in conjunction with the Threat and Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, and Stakeholder Preparedness Course. The course gives responders, local public officials, and private sector stakeholders the ability to prioritize their

mitigation efforts where they are most needed by using locally relevant threats and hazards to assess a community's capacity to prevent, prepare for, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from a significant event.

The course was designed

to help people improve their abilities and contribute to the safety of CNMI residents. The participants were specifically taught how to conduct physical security assessments and how to better protect Saipan's critical infrastructure. (PR)

## Magic 100.3 donates \$5K in promo activities to the NMC Foundation

In support of funding higher education in the CNMI, radio station Magic 100.3 recently donated \$5,000 worth of radio advertisements to the Northern Marianas College Foundation to help with its marketing efforts for their upcoming golf open in March.

"We are proud to help the Northern Marianas College and its foundation market its upcoming Golf Open," Magic 100.3 program director RV Cabreros said. "The upcoming tournament is for a great cause and we hope that other companies and organizations in the CNMI will also help support the college."

For the first time, NMC's



Magic 100.3 recently donated \$5,000 worth of radio advertisements to the Northern Marianas College to help promote its upcoming golf open in March.

tournament will be a two-day event and will be held on March 18 and 19, 2023, on the east and west courses of the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort. The tournament fee for the 2023 golf open is \$250.

"The foundation and I are grateful for Magic 100.3's continued support of the college," NMC Foundation chair Ben Babauta said.

The tournament, which

is the signature event of the NMC Foundation, aims to raise funds for the college for its rebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Due to the devastation and destruction of Super Typhoon Soudelor and Yutu, the college has been aggressively seeking funds from all available sources to rebuild classrooms, offices, labs, and workforce spaces for the CNMI community.

The foundation is seeking the CNMI private sector's support through fundraising events like the golf



### SCS SPELLING CHAMPS

Celine JeongBin Park, an 8th grade student at Saipan Community School, was named the schoolwide Spelling Bee winner during the competition last Jan. 20. Park will be travelling to Guam in March to compete in the next level for the Regional Scripps Spelling Bee.



Iyani Muña won at the elementary level of the schoolwide Saipan Community School Spelling Bee last Jan. 20 and was able to move on to the next round, against the SCS junior high students. SCS

### NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

#### JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

NMHC JVA No.	Positions:	Salary:	Opening Date	Closing Date
2023-007	CDBG-DR Loan Specialist (1-Position)	UNGRADED \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00 Per annum	January 17, 2023	February 1, 2023 4:00 PM
2023-008	CDBG-DR Compliance Specialist (1-Position)	UNGRADED \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00 Per annum	January 17, 2023	February 1, 2023 4:00 PM

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information can be accessed at [www.nmhgov.net](http://www.nmhgov.net) and [www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com](http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com).

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; the CDBG-DR Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Ladera Building, Chalan Laulau, Beach Road; or email application and documents to [officemanager@nmhgov.net](mailto:officemanager@nmhgov.net).

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or by email to [officemanager@nmhgov.net](mailto:officemanager@nmhgov.net). NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/  
Zenie P. Mafnas  
Acting-Corporate Director

tournament.

Interested companies and individuals who would like to help the college with its rebuilding efforts can donate educational tax credit, cash, or in-kind contributions by visiting [www.marianas.edu/golf](http://www.marianas.edu/golf) or by contacting NMC Foundation coordinator Carla Sablan at [carla.sablan@marianas.edu](mailto:carla.sablan@marianas.edu). (NMC)

### Summer Internship in the Outdoors



Join us this summer for an internship teaching others about fishing and birdwatching at American Memorial Park or War in the Pacific National Historical Park. These 12-week positions are for 18 - 30 year olds, paid and include transportation to a workshop in the United States in May, 2023.

For more information and to apply, visit [environmentamericas.org/diversity-internships](http://environmentamericas.org/diversity-internships)

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# GCC officially opens crime lab building annex

The Guam Community College cut the ribbon to signal the opening the Gregorio G. Perez Crime Lab Building Annex last on Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023, in an event that was attended by the Department of Interior's assistant secretary for Insular and International Affairs, Carmen G. Cantor.

The long-awaited crime lab annex features a 4,915-square-foot laboratory; 1,945 square feet of administrative spaces to include a Combined DNA Index room and a case room; additionally, it also has 1,980 square feet of educational areas for GCC's Criminal Justice program.

Years ago, GCC joined forces with the Friends of the Crime Lab to host the Regional Forensic Science Symposium, which later led to a second symposium a year later. "It was quite successful and brought focus to the island and the work that law enforcement personnel shared from across our region.

What was important then is just as important now," said GCC president Dr. Mary A. Y. Okada.

With the support of DOI, GCC launched the design of the laboratory, which included DNA and toxicology facilities for the Guam Police Department, along with classrooms and faculty offices for GCC.

"Our first partnership was with the Governor's Office and the Department of the Interior. It was back in 2009 when GCC applied for the technical assistance grant to support the First Regional Forensic Science Symposium," Okada stated. "It was from this symposium that interest grew in higher education courses in the forensic sciences. Shortly thereafter, GCC secured the Architectural & Engineering funding in 2010."

GCC worked with GPD on the specifications for the lab and this was completed in 2012. After this step, Okada added.

The addition of a DNA Forensic Lab should significantly increase the ability of local law enforcement to analyze crime scene evidence on-island. The facility will also support GCC's Associates of Science in Criminal Justice programs for Forensic Computer Examiners and Forensic Lab Technicians.

Funding for the design of the GCC DNA Forensic Lab was provided through a DOI grant of \$365,653. Construction of the facility is funded through a \$5 million loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that also funded the renovation of Building 100, which is now part of Building E.



Department of Interior's assistant secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor, Gov. Lourdes Leon Guerrero, and Lt. Gov. Joshua Tenorio join Guam Community College president Dr. Mary A. Y. Okada and other dignitaries to cut the ribbon to signal the opening the Gregorio G. Perez Crime Lab Building Annex last on Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023, in Guam.

GCC

"I truly believe that given the track record for the college, we were able to demonstrate our commitment and ability to see this through," said Okada.

The single-story facility includes:

■ 4,915 square foot laboratory including a secure receiving room, Alternate Light Source lab, Biology Exam lab, Post Amp lab, Bio-vestibule, Pre Amp lab, Reagent room, lab storage, refrigerator storage and an evidence storage room;

■ 1,945 square foot administration area that includes two offices, a Combined DNA Index room, a library, and case room; and

■ An additional 1,980 square foot educational area (2 classrooms, 2 offices) will be used for the Guam Community College Criminal Justice program.

Okada was appreciative of GCC's partners in the project: The Friends of the Crime Lab, DOI, USDA, GPD, Gov. Lourdes Leon Guerrero and Lt. Gov. Joshua Tenorio, senators, and Taniguchi Ruth Makio Architects.

Construction of the Gregorio G. Perez Crime Lab Annex project broke ground on Oct. 4, 2019. It is designed to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Certified.

## GMS students shine bright at PGFC competition

Rain or shine, the Green Meadow School's Falcons once again proved their determination to win at the recent Primary Grade Forensic Conference competition held at Oleai Elementary School on Jan. 14, 2023. Falcon competitors prevailed in different categories. The administration, faculty, staff, and parents of Green Meadow School would like to extend their congratulations to the following winners and everyone who participated in the competition:

### K-2 CATEGORY:

#### READERS FORUM

(RF-MA)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sansone Nikolai P. Cabrera
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Chloe Faith M. Dela Cruz
(RF-MB)	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Jaira Hope S. Quindoza
	5 <sup>th</sup>	Colin James B. Lilles
(RF-MD)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Avaline A. Jebehn
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Ya'Rlis Demetria M. Doram
(RF-MD)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Isaiah Leiann S. Formanes
	4 <sup>th</sup>	Bentley Peter Jo R. Koshiro

### CHORAL SPEAKING

(CSPK-A)	1 <sup>st</sup>	Maria Margaux G. Chutin
		Kylie Brooke B. Diaz
		Naa Kowah P. Lartey
		Elliana Marie G. Salamat
		Rhavyn A. Zapanta
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Faith Chloe M. Dela Cruz
		Ya'Rlis Demetria M. Doram
		Avaline A. Jebehn
		Jaira Hope S. Quindoza
	4 <sup>th</sup>	Ariel Faith A. Gabule
		Abrianna C. Dizon
		Emma Louise P. Hidalgo
		Rodolf DL. Lopez Jr.
		Aerith Rei F. Dondonilla

### 3-5 CATEGORY:

#### Dramatic Interpretation

(DI-A)	1 <sup>st</sup>	Jade Haven S. Quindoza
(DI-B)	1 <sup>st</sup>	Jamie Andrea A. Palabay

#### Humorous Interpretation

(HI-A)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Paul James A. Mendoza
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Christopher Leyland G. Duenas
(HI-B)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Amir Zachariah T. Brantley

#### Impromptu

(IMP-A)	1 <sup>st</sup>	Angelee SG. Agdoro
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Green Meadow School winners of the 3-5 Division pose with their coaches.

GMS



Green Meadow School winners of the K-2 Division pose with their coaches.

GMS

### Declamation

4 <sup>th</sup>	John Raphael Q. Aguon
5 <sup>th</sup>	Jeron Carl M. Marzo

### Readers Forum

(RF-MA)	4 <sup>th</sup>	Roanne Palma
	5 <sup>th</sup>	Jadean Bryana Balboa

(RF-MC)	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Paul James A. Mendoza
	4 <sup>th</sup>	Jayden Rei Pulido

(RF-MD)	1 <sup>st</sup>	Albert Miguel U. Santos
	5 <sup>th</sup>	Jeron Carl M. Marzo

(RF-ME)	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Lanz Carmelo
		G. Salamat

(RF-MF)	4 <sup>th</sup>	Gerli Liam Espiritu
	5 <sup>th</sup>	John Rey D. Daca

(RF-MG)	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Iandre A. Ranin
	5 <sup>th</sup>	Nicole Q. Tangonan

### DUO (DUO-A)

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Aira Joy D. Daca
	Nicole Q. Tangonan

### DUO (DUO-B)

1 <sup>st</sup>	Julianna Kai Ortiz
	Roanne Palma

### CHORAL SPEAKING

#### (CSPK-A)

3 <sup>rd</sup>	John Matthew O. Aumentado
	Czainah P. Chutin

### CHORAL SPEAKING

#### (CSPK-A)

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Aira Joy D. Daca
	Miel Jewel L. Mabaquiao

### CHORAL SPEAKING

#### (CSPK-A)

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Iandre A. Ranin
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## Paradiso Resort & Spa is latest ProaPerks partner

Paradiso Resort & Spa is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations. All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive five free swimming pool passes per month.

Paradiso Resort & Spa is located on Figan Lane, in Koblerville. They can be reached by calling (670) 288-5555. More information about the resort can be found at [www.paradiso.saipan.com](http://www.paradiso.saipan.com).

Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include Northern Marianas College alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing [proaperks@marianas.edu](mailto:proaperks@marianas.edu). (PR)

# Island Snapshots



## SPAY/NEUTER CLINIC

Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Control Program staff assist volunteer Emily Hurt, right, during their last day of the spay/neuter clinic on Friday at the SMO Dog Shelter in As Perdido, in which they sterilized 68 animals.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Alison Hadley, executive director of Guam Animals In Need, or GAIN, is seen teaching Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Control Program staff about evaluating the health and behavior of shelter dogs during the spay/neuter clinic on Friday at the SMO Dog Shelter in As Perdido, in which they sterilized 68 animals. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**



Volunteer vet Dr. Brenda Smith from Guam Animals in Need prepares someone's pet cat for surgery, while Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter staff Derek Deleon Guerrero assists on the first day of the spay/neuter clinic at the SMO Dog Shelter in As Perdido last Tuesday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



The waiting area for pets are seen here while Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), kneeling, in black, picks up his dog that was neutered on the first day of the spay/neuter clinic at the SMO Dog Shelter in As Perdido on Tuesday.

LEIGH GASES



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Control Program staff, join clinic volunteer Kiana Propst, left, and Emily Hurt, second right, during their last day of the spay/neuter clinic on Friday at the SMO Dog Shelter in As Perdido, in which they sterilized 68 animals.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lauren Cabrera, center, along with Alison Hadley, and Simion Nepayo, check on a dog during the first day of the spay/neuter clinic last week at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter in As Perdido.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Calvin Borja, left, administers a shot, while Simion Nepayo, top right, and Derek Deleon Guerrero, assist during the first day of the spay/neuter clinic at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter in As Perdido.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



## OFF THEY GO!

Volunteers check to make sure the cages full of boondie dogs are secure before their flight to Guam on Monday morning as part of the effort to reduce strays in the CNMI by adopting them out to families in the United States.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Thirty-nine boondie dogs were flown via the Micronesian Air Cargo Services from Saipan to Guam, then off to adoptive families in the United States via Lisa Schoppa-Meador Animal Travel Agent, on Monday in an effort to reduce the stray animal population in the CNMI.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/QUINN BREADY

# Opinion

## Saipan Tribune

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## EDITORIAL

### Unchecked gun violence reveals who we are as a nation

**H**istory is full of horrific events in which we shake our heads and ask, "How did that happen? What were they thinking?"

The Holocaust and slavery are two prime examples.

It begs the question of what is transpiring today that will be regarded by future generations as deplorable. That historians will record with the hope that they will never be repeated.

Climate change, yes. And then there is gun violence.

California has had three mass shootings in the last four days. Seven people were killed and one injured in Half Moon Bay on Monday. One person was killed and four injured at an East Oakland gas station later that evening. Eleven people were killed and nine injured in Monterey Park on Saturday.

We are not even at the end of the first month of 2023. Yet the Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay shootings bring the number of mass shootings (in which four or more people were killed or injured) to 39 this year, according to the Gun Violence Archive. That follows the 647 mass shootings recorded in 2022 and 690 mass shootings in 2021.

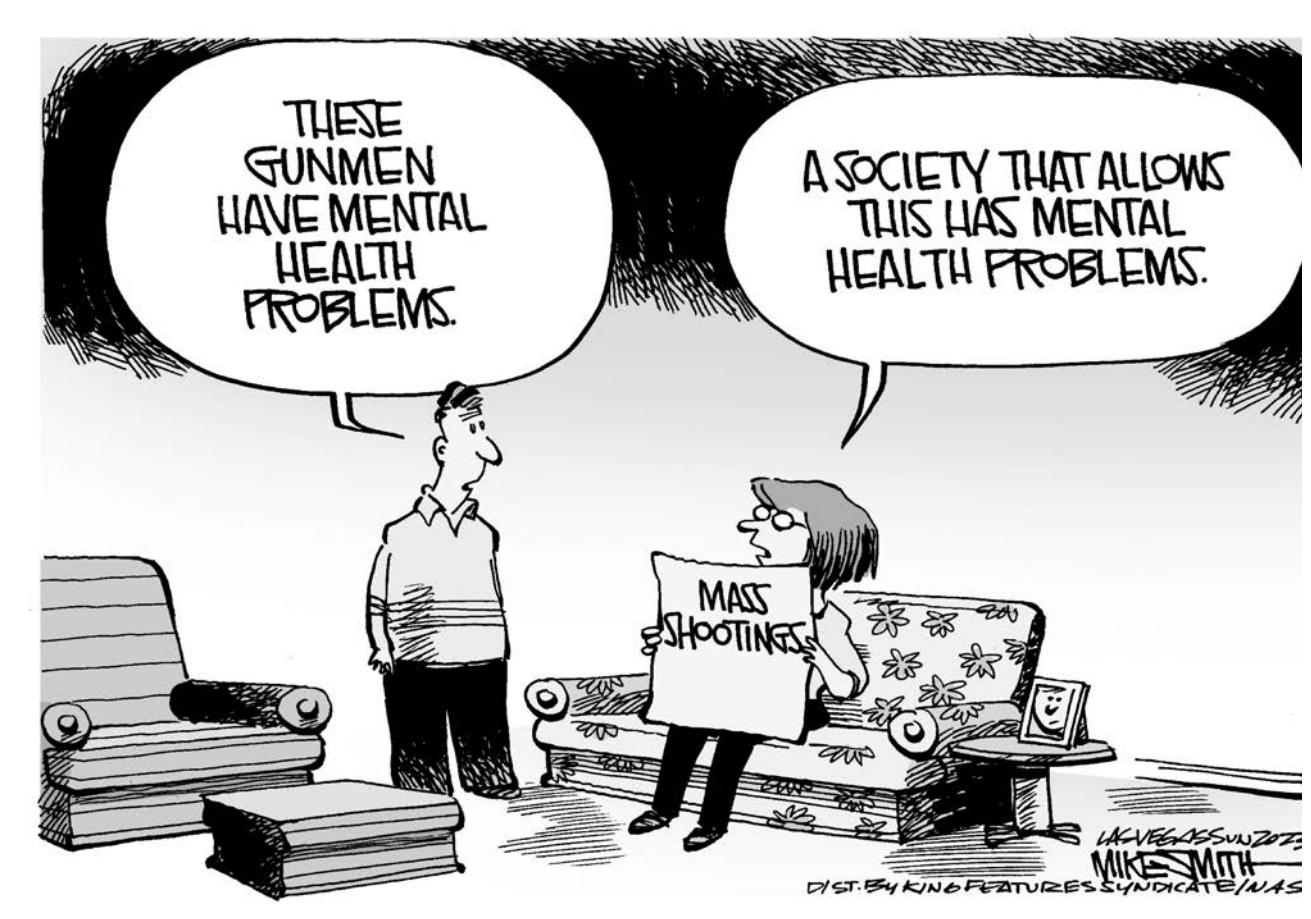
Those numbers demand action. But don't look to the Supreme Court for help. The court's June ruling in the New York concealed carry case is an indication that as bad as America's gun violence problem is, the high court is more likely to make it worse.

As for Congress, the NRA spends millions every year to retain its firm grip on lawmakers. For example, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, has received more funding from gun rights groups than any other politician since he was elected to Congress. All told, Cruz has raked in more than \$400 million, which explains his position that gun control laws won't help and that we need to be spending more money to stop violent criminals.

Yes, California has some of the toughest gun control laws in the nation. As a result, the state's rate of firearm mortality (8.5 gun deaths per 100,000 people in 2020) is among the nation's lowest, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That is in contrast to the 13.7 gun deaths per 100,000 people nationally. Only six states, Connecticut (6), Hawaii (3.4), Massachusetts (3.7), New Jersey (5), New York (5.3) and Rhode Island (5.1) have a lower rate of firearm deaths. Mississippi (28.6) and Wyoming (25.9) have the highest rates.

All told, more Americans died of gun-related injuries in 2020 than in any other year on record, according to the CDC. That includes a record number of gun murders, as well as a near-record number of gun suicides.

*See UNCHECKED on Next Page*



## The grinding persistence of America's police problem

**Y**ou will not believe the video that was released Friday night showing Memphis police officers beating—ultimately to death—a young Black man.

I don't really mean that, of course. If you live in the U.S., and participate in society, you likely have no difficulty believing that a gang of violent police officers fatally pummeled Tyre Nichols in what the city's police chief accurately described as a "heinous" attack. Indeed, if you have an internet connection or a television, you have probably seen similar videos of police officers killing Black men, and women too, in other American cities. By choking, for example. Or shooting in the back. You may have seen videos of police not killing Black men—merely assaulting them while they are prone or otherwise defenseless.

Occasionally, videos surface of police killing or beating a white man. Statistically, those attacks are less common. But they're just as real. Since 2015, police officers have fatally shot more than 1,000 people per year in the U.S., according to a database maintained by The Washington Post. That's nearly three deaths per day.

America has a police problem. And its police problem is rooted in (though not exclusive to) its race problem, which is a problem, in turn, rooted so deep in our national character that it was written into the Constitution. Martin Luther King Jr. wasn't arrested and

thrown in jail by the Ku Klux Klan. Police did that. John Lewis was not beaten bloody in Selma by the Proud Boys of 20th century Alabama. The attackers were men wearing badges, wielding clubs, earning paychecks from the public treasury.

Things have changed. Except in all the ways that they haven't. Philando Castile wasn't shot to death by drug dealers. It was the police, again.

Black Lives Matter is a statement of aspiration, not of fact. That remains the crux of the problem. Many troubles of American policing, including the militarization of forces, flow from that reality, which is a continuing source of national unease.

That all five of the violent police officers in Memphis are Black had no bearing on the deadly outcome. Yet it's nonetheless politically significant. It provides an opportunity for a more vigorous national discussion, one slightly less hobbled by the inevitable brandishing of claims of white racial innocence. It wasn't white cops this time. But it was the same familiar system, yielding a familiar result.

**Since 2015, police officers have fatally shot more than 1,000 people per year in the U.S. ...That's nearly three deaths per day**

**By FRANCIS WILKINSON**

Bloomberg Opinion

Francis Wilkinson is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering U.S. politics and policy. Previously, he was an editor for the Week, a writer for Rolling Stone, a communications consultant and a political media strategist.



Washington has proved a poor source of remedies. Meanwhile, the cities and towns where highly publicized police killings have taken place seem unable to grapple with the sprawling causes and consequences. We don't see many regional congressional hearings anymore. But perhaps it's time for Congress—or at least those elements of Congress that are willing and capable—to hold hearings in Memphis and other cities mired in police violence. In the role of a judge riding circuit, political leaders need to listen to cries for justice, and report what they hear to the nation.

In his remarkable book "Freedom's Dominion," Jefferson Cowie notes, "Historians have long recognized the oppressive tensions that gave birth to American freedom but have rarely addressed the grinding persistence of the problem." Yet that grinding persistence is getting harder to ignore, which is why the forces of reaction are frantically banning the teaching of history and literature and anything else that threatens to make the friction louder, more visible and more difficult to pretend away.

Memphis is in many ways an apt place to begin the latest round of questions about why America can't—won't—get out of its own glorious way. The city is poor and broken. It is also a place of unparalleled verve that has heaped riches, real and cultural, upon America and the world. The city, a former cotton exchange, stands at the intersection of Elvis and B.B. King, Sun and Stax; it changed the world in ways that still reverberate. Its siren song was so vibrant and acute that Vaclav Havel credited it with piercing the dull brutality of communist Eastern Europe.

Memphis is also the city where Dr. King, arguably the most majestic American of the 20th century, was shot dead. It's a city of bold beginnings and dread endings. Maybe we can start there, and work our way, north and south, east and west, toward freedom.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com); or through our website at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

# New Year in America, same as the old year, but with an AR-15 for kids

By GENE COLLIER  
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

**A**s for that inappreciable discussion about when in the New Year you should stop saying "Happy New Year," we might finally have hit on a solution here in the good old USA: When the number of people killed in mass shootings in January flies past 60, yeah, maybe knock it off.

In little more than three weeks, 67 of us are dead already through this peculiarly American method of predictable carnage, at least as I sit down to write this. But it's early in the day.

The Lunar New Year came in with a spray of bullets at a dance hall in California, where 11 died in the second of that state's third mass shooting in eight days. The new year in Alabama brought a significant tweak to that state's gun laws — you no longer need a permit to carry a concealed weapon.

The new year in Pennsylvania saw Altoona school directors vote unanimously to allow school security officers to access semi-automatic weapons in the event of an extreme emergency, I guess like if one fine day there's a whole platoon of school shooters carrying assault rifles that has to be dealt with.

Talk about a mass shooting.

Of course, nobody would dare say that couldn't happen, not in a country that won't be satisfied until everybody who can lift one has a gun, the deadlier the better. The new year brought to Las Vegas a gun industry trade show that included an offering from WEE1 Tactical, namely the JR-15, a kids version of the semi-automatic AR-15 assault rifle favored by mass murderers coast to coast.

I only wish I was making that up.

"The JR-15 is a .22 Long Rifle that functions like a modern sporting rifle, however and most importantly its small size, lightweight rugged polymer construction and ergonomics are geared towards smaller enthusiasts," the company says on its web site. "Our goal

was to build to build a truly unique shooting platform that a Parent or Coach can safely use to teach a younger enthusiast."

I guess it's safer when parent and coach are capitalized.

A previous notice on the website said the JR-15 brand was "meant to be EDGY. We believe its (sic) exciting and will build brand recognition and loyalty." Better yet, the company said, the children's assault weapon "looks, feels, and operates just like mom and dad's."



A Springfield Armory SAINT M-LOCK AR-15 semi-automatic rifle is displayed on a wall of guns during the National Rifle Association Annual Meeting at the George R. Brown Convention Center, in Houston, on Saturday, May 28, 2022.

But if this horrifies you, please be advised that things could be worse at least WEE1 Tactical isn't giving kids books! Fortunately, the new year brought new book laws to Florida, where Gov. Ron DeSantis has started boxing up classroom libraries until the books are properly "vetted."

"My heart is broken for Florida students today as I am forced to pack up my classroom library," a Manatee County teacher

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Breaking the deficit paradigm

The truth of the matter is we are facing the biggest financial challenge since the creation of the Commonwealth. We can only overcome this challenge by thinking outside the box (breaking the paradigm). We must cut cost and create new revenues if there is to be genuine hope with light shining at the end of this ordeal. Creating new revenues is what will really save us in the end, as cutting cost is necessary to stop the bleeding but the therapeutic challenge requires finding new sources of revenues, as we can't just write a law to make money—it takes real work! Only cutting cost will never erase the deficit nor will it give any real hope for our future!

AMERICA'S  
From Page 8

Yet it's unlikely the California shootings will do anything to move the needle on reducing the amount of gun violence in either California or the United States.

Our collective response to the Sandy Hook, Uvalde and Columbine mass shootings makes that clear.

America is a nation that has for decades failed to address its gun violence problem and has no clear strategy for doing so in the future.

Shamefully, this is who we are.

(c) 2023 the Contra Costa Times (Walnut Creek, Calif.)

wrote this week on Facebook, where another called DeSantis' initiative "a travesty to education" that interfered with the long-standing strategy to "connect with books and develop a love for lifelong learning."

All of that was in Judd Legum's story for the website Popular.info, which said teachers are being told to make classroom libraries inaccessible or face felony prosecution, as per DeSantis-promoted regulations that books have to be vetted by librarians, even though the governor views librarians and teachers as similarly "woke," his favorite word.

Author Stephen King immediately went to Twitter with some timely advice. "Hey, kids! It's your old buddy Steve King telling you that if they ban a book in your school, haul your ass to the nearest library or book store ASAP and find out what they don't want you to read."

What DeSantis especially doesn't want them to read are books by and about Black people, particularly if those books are history books that make white people uncomfortable. The higher the learning, the less he likes it, and no one is surprised.

DeSantis' Florida Department of Education rejected an advanced placement class for the state's high schools on the dubious basis that it indoctrinates students to a political agenda.

"As submitted, the course is a vehicle for a political agenda and leaves large, ambiguous gaps that can be filled with additional ideological material, which we will not allow," said Bryan Griffin, the governor's press secretary.

Oh no. Ambiguous gaps. Additional ideological material.

The good news is that Florida trails only Texas for banning school books, with nearly 600 titles already pulled, and it's got most of the year to catch up.

So that's what we're telling school kids as the new year begins. Guns good. Books bad.

We tried giving them the safest country in the world, because guns make us safe, and we have more guns than people. Didn't work. Maybe we can give them the dumbest country in the world.

Some may not believe it but this is a great time for a full reset of our government, boards, and commission that will allow the CNMI to function more cost-effectively and more prudently at all levels. For too long the public service appointments to boards and commissions have been treated and paid like they were full-time jobs in the tens-of-thousands for only meeting once or twice a month! These political appointments have been nothing but that—political emissaries who don't earn nor deserve the extraordinary amount of the money they are being paid. If these board and commission members where actually doing something qualitatively and quantitatively to increase production and/or revenues, they would really be earning these large salaries but they are just meeting, deciding, and voting. Teachers do more real work than any of the board and commission members for less pay.

Heck, the five-member cannabis commissioners are making \$55,000 a year, yet in one year they only met nine times and the most they have met is 18 times in one year, while only bringing in less than \$50,000 a year. The Casino Commission, who are the highest commissioners paid at over \$70,000 a year, are the biggest culprits of this overpaid practice, as they also only meet to make decisions and vote. The pathetic thing about this Casino Commission is they haven't lifted a finger to fight for our money (\$77 million), not even filing a lawsuit on behalf of the people but watching everyone else who is owed money collect on the sale of IPI collateral equipment. CEDA is another agency that is supposed to be leading our economic reforms, but we have spent millions every year just paying salaries and getting virtually no returns. MPLT is another board that isn't worth the paper that created the board, having done nothing to help NMDs since the creation of the board; just collected money and voted on cosmetic policies.

WE the people have been getting robbed by these appointees and it was all by design of the GOP to pay their people,

which mainly allowed them to stay in power. How else could Ralph have gotten over 6,000 votes without the help of emissaries in very high places? But while the agencies can still function without a secretary, the CNMI cannot continue to function without new revenue sources. Thinking outside the box dictates one temporary solution being to ask for a one-year volunteer force to come forward to serve on these boards and commissions for free just so we can get new governing legislation over these boards and commission and the money to pay them. How many present board and commission members will volunteer to stay and how many other public servants will come forward to offer their services will be interesting to see. We can separate the greedy from the civic-minded who just want to serve and help.

It's truly time to generate legislation to govern the salaries of all the boards and commissions at a more reasonable rate, as these people are supposed to be performing a public service, not full-time employees. We need a full reset of these boards and commissions to break the existing paradigm and I won't suggest an amount but it should be a standard across all boards and commissions. I don't blame citizens for taking these appointments and their salaries, but I do detest their loyalty to Ralph and the GOP over their task and the people, especially the Casino Commission who didn't even try to protect nor lay claim to our money in court. But we can't react like children who only live in the now, as our leaders must have the fortitude, foresight and reforms to not only cut cost but to also prepare for the future. Fix the boards and commissions and cut costs but please address both ends of the deficit candle that is burning and take some small measures to put out one end by creating new revenue sources that will pay off immediately and in the long run.

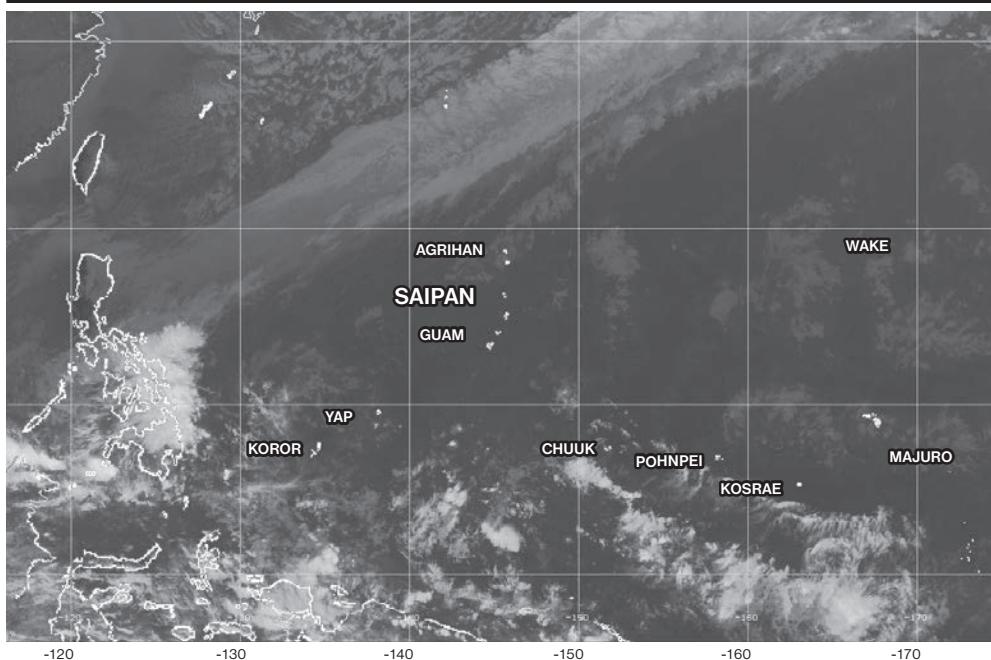
**Ambrose M. Bennett**  
Kagman III, Saipan

# The Weather

## 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
86°	77°	86°	77°	85°

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



**PICTURE TIME: 8:40 AM, MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2023**

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows isolated showers to the west of the radar, while satellite shows shows to the Marianas Waters. The buoys reveal combined seas of 6 to 8 feet composed mainly of an east swell, with a smaller north swell and wind waves moving through it.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

MICRONESIA		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	86° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:15 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:15 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	2:10 AM	1:39 PM
Wednesday	-	3:03 AM	2:26 PM
Thursday	-	3:57 AM	3:16 PM
Friday	-	4:48 AM	4:08 PM
Saturday	-	5:37 AM	5:00 PM

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## AROUND THE GLOBE

AROUND THE GLOBE		
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	75° / 61°
Beijing	Sunny	45° / 21°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 59°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	81° / 69°
London	Sunny	48° / 39°
Los Angeles	Sunny	73° / 53°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Rain	66° / 55°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 72°
New York	Mostly Sunny	52° / 44°
Osaka	Sunny	52° / 39°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	46° / 41°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	43° / 30°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	55° / 39°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	71° / 54°
San Francisco	Sunny	60° / 44°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	32° / 21°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	55° / 39°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	55° / 44°

## TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET

5:42 AM	High Tide	1.33
9:52 AM	Low Tide	1.14
2:51 PM	High Tide	1.53
10:57 PM	Low Tide	-0.17

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 17, 2023

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3, 6 via Incheon	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
TW9308	3:30AM	7:10AM	2, 4	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6	TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
				TW9307	9:00PM	2:30AM+1	1, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, TWay Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

## MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

### INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022

SAIPAN TO TINIAN			TINIAN TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.		10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)
SAIPAN TO ROTA					
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.		9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.		2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	
SAIPAN TO GUAM			GUAM TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.		12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.		6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.			
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022			
SAIPAN TO ROTA</			

# Business

## Source: Dutch, Japanese join US limits on chip tech to China

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Japan and the Netherlands have agreed to a deal with the U.S. to restrict China's access to materials used to make advanced computer chips, a person familiar with the agreement told The Associated Press on Sunday.

The person declined to be identified because the deal hasn't yet been formally announced. It's unclear when all three sides will unveil the agreement. The White House declined to comment.

The Biden administration in October imposed export controls to limit China's ability to access advanced chips, which it says can be used to make weapons, commit human rights abuses and improve the speed and accuracy of its military logistics. It urged allies

like Japan and the Netherlands to follow suit.

China has responded angrily, saying trade curbs will disrupt supply chains and the global economic recovery.

"We hope the relevant countries will do the right thing and work together to uphold the multilateral trade regime and safeguard the stability of the global industrial and supply chains," China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said earlier this month. "This will also serve to protect their own long-term interests."

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said Friday that Dutch and Japanese officials were in Washington for talks led by President Joe Biden's national security adviser, Jake

Sullivan, that covered the "safety and security of emerging technologies," efforts to aid Ukraine and other issues.

"We're grateful that they were able to come to D.C. and to have these talks," Kirby said.

Kirby declined to say whether there was a deal on tighter export controls on semiconductor technology. This month, Biden met separately with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Dutch Prime

Minister Mark Rutte to push for tighter export controls.

In a press conference last week, Rutte was asked about the talks but said they involve "such sensitive material ... high-quality technology that the Dutch government chooses to communicate about it very carefully and that means in a very limited way."

Veldhoven, Netherlands-based ASML, a leading maker of semiconductor production

equipment, said Sunday that it didn't know any details about the agreement or how it would affect ASML's business.

ASML is the world's only producer of machines that use extreme ultraviolet lithography to make advanced semiconductor chips. The Dutch government has prohibited ASML from exporting that equipment to China since 2019, but the company had still been shipping low-

er-quality lithography systems to China.

ASML has research and manufacturing centers in Beijing and Shenzhen, China, as well as a regional headquarters in Hong Kong.

U.S. officials say China is spending heavily to develop its fledgling semiconductor producers but so far cannot make the high-end chips used in the most advanced smartphones and other devices.

## Biden, McCarthy to discuss debt limit in talks on Wednesday



AP

President Joe Biden, right, speaks at the top of a meeting with congressional leaders to discuss legislative priorities for the rest of the year, Nov. 29, 2022, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, as House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Calif., Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, of N.Y. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023, that he is looking forward to discussing with Biden a "reasonable and responsible way to lift the debt ceiling" when the two meet for their first sit-down on Wednesday with McCarthy as leader of the chamber.

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said Sunday he is looking forward to discussing with President Joe Biden a "reasonable and responsible way that we can lift the debt ceiling" when the two meet Wednesday for their first sit-down at the White House since McCarthy was elected to the post.

McCarthy, R-Calif., said he wants to address spending cuts along with raising the debt limit, even though the White House has ruled out linking those two issues together as the government tries to avoid a potentially devastating financial default.

The speaker pledged that cuts to Social Security and Medicare would be off the table.

"I know the president said he didn't want to have any discussion (on cuts), but I think it's very important that our whole government is designed to find compromise," McCarthy told CBS' "Face the Nation." "I want to sit down to-

gether, work out an agreement that we can move forward to put us on a path to balance—and at the same time not put any of our debt in jeopardy at the same time."

Asked whether he would make a guarantee, McCarthy said, "There will not be a default," though he suggested that declaration depended on the willingness of Biden and Democrats to negotiate.

The White House on Sunday confirmed Wednesday's meeting on "a range of issues." It said Biden looked forward to "strengthening his working relationship" with McCarthy and to asking about the speaker's plan on spending, noting that the first House bill passed by Republicans this year to slash IRS funding would ultimately increase the deficit.

"The President will ask Speaker McCarthy if he intends to meet his Constitutional obligation to prevent a national default, as every other House

and Senate leader in U.S. history has done," the White House said. "He will underscore that the economic security of all Americans cannot be held hostage to force unpopular cuts on working families."

McCarthy was elected speaker on a historic post-midnight 15th ballot early on Jan. 7, overcoming holdouts from his own ranks and tensions that have tested the new GOP majority ability to govern.

Word of the long-awaited White House meeting comes at a time of divided government in Washington with a debt ceiling crisis brewing and House Republicans ready for confrontation.

McCarthy has been eager to push Biden to the negotiating table, hoping to make good on the promises the GOP leader made to holdouts during his campaign to become speaker to pare federal spending back to 2022 budget levels, which would be a sizable 8% budget cut.

The White House has made clear that Biden is not willing to entertain policy concessions in exchange for lifting the debt limit, which is the nation's borrowing authority. The United States bumped up against that limit earlier this month, and the Treasury Department has deployed "extraordinary measures" to stave off a potential default for at least a few more months.

Biden himself has scoffed at the idea of negotiating spending cuts, telling Democratic congressional leaders last week that Republicans were "genuinely serious about cutting Social Security, cutting Medicare."

On Sunday, when McCarthy was asked if he would push cuts to those programs, he said, "Let's take those off the table." Pressed on possible defense cuts that he may have promised to House conservatives, McCarthy responded: "I want to eliminate waste wherever it is. ... I want to look at every single department."

## Dierking joins the BankGuam Holding Co. board of directors

**HAGATNA, Guam**—BankGuam Holding Company announces the appointment of Kamia Leon Guerrero Dierking as an independent member of its board. Dierking's appointment was



Dierking

effective Dec. 27, 2022, and fills the vacancy left by the late Martin Leon Guerrero who passed away last year.

Dierking was also appointed to the Board of Directors for Bank of Guam and BG Investment Services, Inc., both of which are subsidiaries of BankGuam Holding Company. She serves on the following committees: Nominating & Governance, ALCO, Audit Committee, Trust Committee, and Compensation Committee.

"We are excited to welcome Kamia to our BankGuam Holding Company Familia. She brings new energy, ideas and a wealth of experience to the table. We look forward to her insights and expertise in sales, product development and people management and know she will be an asset as we continue our work to build strong communities and better lives for our people," said BankGuam Holding Company vice chair and Bank of Guam president and CEO Joaquin P. LG. Cook.

Dierking is the director of Enterprise Marketing at GTA focused on driving profitable

growth, brand loyalty, sales integration and engagement across all business channels for GTA Business Enterprise offerings.

Since joining GTA in 2009, Dierking has nearly two decades of experience in telecom, where she has held a variety of roles, including senior-level roles in product development, sales, marketing, public relations, and employee experience/human resources.

Most recently, Dierking held the position of director of Employee Experience for GTA working closely with stakeholders to develop strategies and plans that embrace technology and data, designing a great employee experience and attracting and retaining talent.

Dierking was born and raised in Guam and is a graduate of Academy of Our Lady of Guam High School and obtained her bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Arizona. She serves on the Board of Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI and has previously served on the Guam Board of Equalization.

For more information, contact: Maria Eugenia H. Leon Guerrero, Executive Vice President | Chief Operating Officer (T) (671) 472-5273 | [maria.leonguerrero@bankofguam.com](mailto:maria.leonguerrero@bankofguam.com). (PR)

# Nation

## Tyre Nichols case revives calls for change in police culture

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** (AP)—An unarmed Black man dies after a videotaped beating by police. The officers involved are fired. After a thorough review of the evidence, criminal charges are swiftly filed against the offending officers.

Investigation, accountability and charges.

This is often the most Black citizens can hope for as the deaths continue. Nationwide, police have killed roughly three people per day consistently since 2020, according to academics and advocates for police reform who track such deaths.

Tyre Nichols' fatal encounter with police officers in Memphis, Tennessee, recorded in video made public Friday night, is a glaring reminder that efforts to reform policing have failed to prevent more flashpoints in an intractable epidemic of brutality.

Nearly 32 years ago, Rodney King's savage beating by police in Los Angeles prompted heartfelt calls for change. They've been repeated in a ceaseless rhythm ever since, punctuated by the deaths of Amadou Diallo in New York, Oscar Grant in Oakland, California, Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and so many others.

George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis in 2020 was so agonizing to watch, it summoned a national reckoning that featured federal legislation proposed in his name and shows of solidarity by corporations and sports leagues. All

### Trump opens 2024 run, says he's 'more committed' than ever

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** (AP)—Former President Donald Trump kicked off his 2024 White House bid with stops Saturday in New Hampshire and South Carolina, events in early-voting states marking the first campaign appearances since announcing his latest run more than two months ago.

"Together we will complete the unfinished business of making America great again," Trump said at an evening event in Columbia to introduce his South Carolina leadership team.

Trump and his allies hope the events in states with enormous power in selecting the nominee will offer a show of force behind the former president after a sluggish start to his campaign that left many questioning his commitment to running again.

"They said, 'He's not doing rallies, he's not campaigning. Maybe he's lost that step,'" Trump said at the New Hampshire GOP's annual meeting in Salem, his first event.

fell short of the shift in law enforcement culture Black people in America have called for — a culture that promotes freedom from fear, trust in police and mutual respect.

"We need public safety, right? We need law enforcement to combat pervasive crime," said Jason Turner, senior pastor of Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis. "Also, we don't want the people who are sworn to protect and serve us brutalizing us for a simple traf-

fic stop, or any offense."

The five Black officers are now fired and charged with murder and other crimes in the Jan. 10 death of Nichols, a 29-year-old skateboarder, FedEx worker and father to a 4-year-old boy.

From police brass and the district attorney's office to the White House, officials said Nichols' killing points to a need for bolder reforms that go beyond simply diversifying the ranks, changing use-of-force rules and encouraging

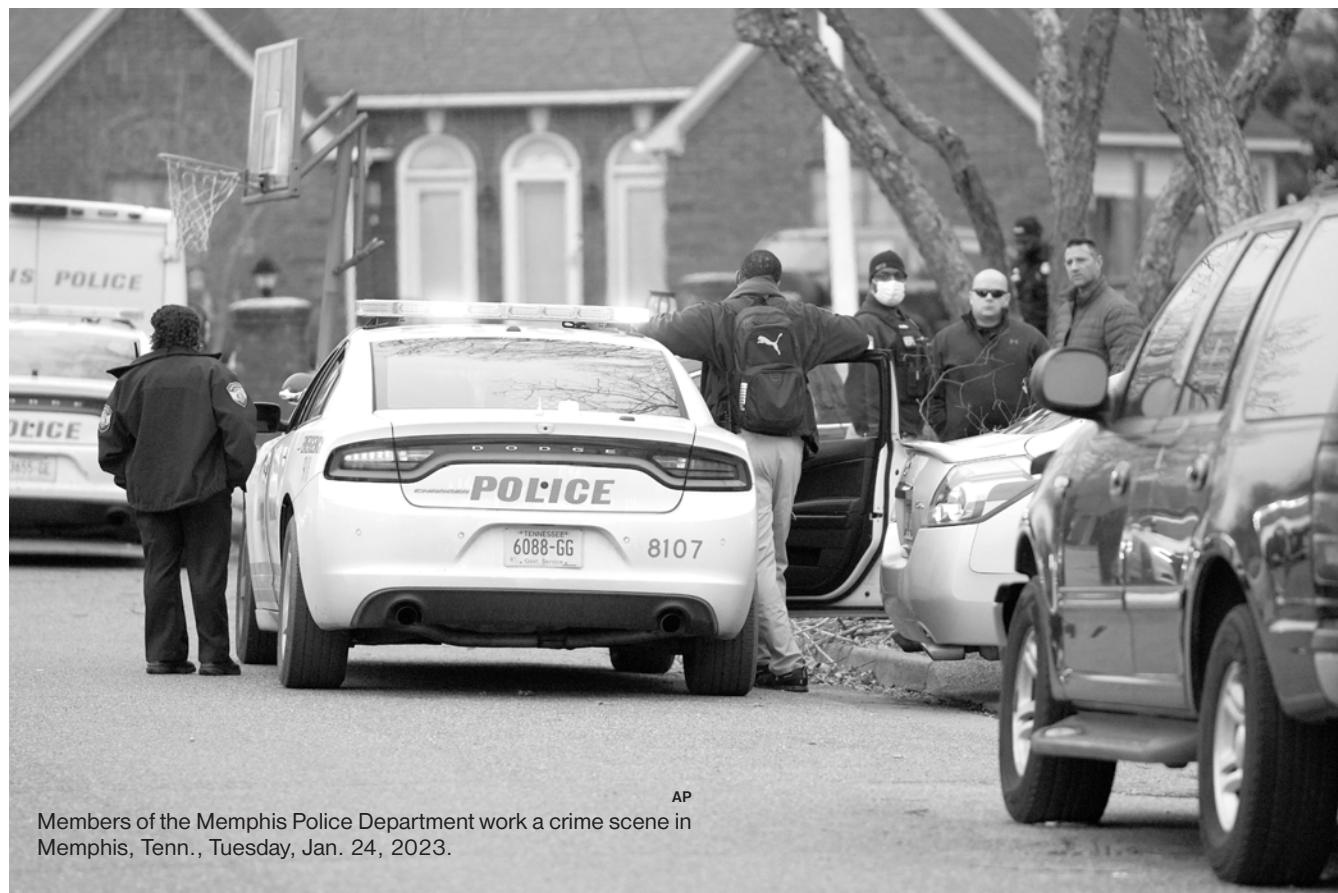
citizens to file complaints.

"The world is watching us," Shelby County District Attorney Steve Mulroy said. "If there is any silver lining to be drawn from this very dark cloud, it's that perhaps this incident can open a broader conversation about the need for police reform."

President Joe Biden joined

national civil rights leaders in similar calls to action.

"To deliver real change, we must have accountability when law enforcement officers violate their oaths, and we need to build lasting trust between law enforcement, the vast majority of whom wear the badge honorably, and the communities



Members of the Memphis Police Department work a crime scene in Memphis, Tenn., Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023.

the election calendar, costing New Hampshire its leadoff primary spot, and accused Biden, a fifth-place finisher in New Hampshire in 2020, of "disgracefully trashing this beloved political tradition."

"I hope you're going to remember that during the general election," Trump told party members. Trump himself twice won the primary, but lost the state each time to Democrats.

Later in South Carolina, Trump said he planned to keep the state's presidential primary as the "first in the South" and called it "a very important state."

In his speech, he hurtled from criticism of Biden and Democrats to disparaging comments about transgender people, mockery of people promoting the use of electric stoves and electric cars, and reminiscing about efforts while serving as president to increase oil production, strike trade deals and crack down on migration at the U.S.-Mexico border.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### Authorities ID 3 killed in shooting at home in Los Angeles

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Three women killed in a weekend shooting at a short-term rental home in an upscale Los Angeles neighborhood were identified Sunday while police searched for suspects. Four other people were wounded, two critically, when gunfire erupted around 2:30 a.m. Saturday at the property in the Beverly Crest area, the Los Angeles Police Department said. The Los Angeles County coroner's office identified those killed as: Iyana Hutton, 33, of Chicago; Nenah Davis, 29, of Bolingbrook, Illinois; and Destiny Sims, 26, of Buckeye, Arizona. Police Sgt. Frank Preciado said Saturday that the three victims were inside a vehicle when they were fatally shot. The shooting follows a Jan. 21 massacre at a dance hall in a Los Angeles suburb that left 11 dead and nine wounded, and shootings at two Half Moon Bay farms on Jan. 23 that left seven dead and one wounded.

#### 3 kids taken in Nebraska carjacking found with frostbite

**GRAND ISLAND, Neb.** (AP)—Three young children were being treated for frostbite in Nebraska Sunday after police said two suspects stole an SUV while they were inside. Around 3 a.m. Sunday, when temperatures were around 0 degrees, a man reported that his 2012 Chevrolet Traverse had been stolen with his three children inside, said Grand Island Police. An 18-year-old man and 17-year-old boy were arrested with the SUV before authorities found the 5-year-old and 1-year-old around 5 a.m. inside a second vehicle that

they are sworn to serve and protect," the president said.

But Memphis, whose 628,000 residents celebrate barbecue and blues music and lament being the place where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, has seen this before. The city took steps advocates called for in a "Reimagine Policing" initiative in 2021, and mirrored a set of policy changes reformers want all departments to implement immediately, known as "8 Can't Wait."

De-escalation training is now required. Officers are told to limit uses of force, exhaust all alternatives before resorting to deadly force and report all uses of force. Tennessee also took action: State law now requires officers to intervene to stop abuse and report excessive force by their colleagues.

Showing unusual transparency for a police department, the MPD now publishes accountability reports that include the race of people subjected to use of force each year. They show Black men and women were overwhelmingly targeted for rougher treatment in 2019, 2020 and 2021. They were subject to nearly 86% of the recorded uses of guns, batons, pepper spray, physical beatings and other force in 2021, the total nearly doubling that year to 1,700 cases.

had been reported stolen in Kearney. About half an hour later, the infant was found on the front porch of a farmhouse in Hall County. All three children had suspected hypothermia and frostbite. The Traverse was involved in a police pursuit before officers knew about the children. Eventually, investigators tracked the Traverse to a rural area of neighboring Buffalo County, and arrested the suspects.

#### Missouri mom convicted of killing her infant twins

**ST. LOUIS** (AP)—A Missouri mother who reported that her infant twins were stillborn has been convicted of manslaughter. Maya Caston, 28, was convicted Friday of second-degree involuntary manslaughter and two counts of child endangerment. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reports that jury found her guilty of lesser charges instead of convicting her of second-degree murder. Prosecutors argued that Caston's lack of action to get care for the babies showed that she caused the deaths. And her extensive internet searches for miscarriages and abortion methods before she gave birth demonstrated that she didn't want the babies. The evidence showed that Caston searched Google for "cheap abortion pills," "free abortion clinic" and "can you cause a miscarriage if you hit yourself in the stomach hard enough?" After she gave birth, Caston researched if you can bury a baby in a back garden. Caston told the jury that she had planned to give the babies up for adoption at a doctor's appointment three days after they were born, but by that time, the babies had died after not eating.

# Asia

## PH probes labor abuses in Kuwait after new killing

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Philippine government said Saturday it will take steps to assess and prevent abuses including rape and maltreatment of Filipino workers in Kuwait, after a housemaid was killed and dumped in a desert in the oil-rich emirate.

The remains of Juliebee Ranara were flown home Friday night from Kuwait, where the 35-year-old was reportedly killed by her employer's son then dumped with burn marks, Migrant Workers Secretary Susan Ople said.

Filipino officials were trying to confirm news reports that she was raped and was pregnant when she was killed by the 17-year-old suspect, who has been taken into custody by Kuwaiti police, she said. The Philippine government would do everything to ensure justice for the victim, she said.

"It's a very gruesome, senseless crime and so the perpetrator must be punished,"

Ople said in an online news conference.

Her killing is the latest tragedy to befall an overseas worker from the Philippines, where about a tenth of its more than 110 million have left mainly due to unemployment and poverty and now work or live in more than 200 countries to provide for families back home. The huge income they send home has helped keep Manila's economy afloat.

Ople said she would send a team of officials to Kuwait to find out what sparked a rise in cases of abuse of Filipino workers in recent years in the tiny emirate and what preventive steps could be taken. Sexual abuse and rape, human trafficking, labor contract violations and illegal terminations were among the common complaints of Filipinos, she said.

About 268,000 Filipinos currently work in Kuwait, including many housemaids. More than 400 Filipinos sought

shelter in recent weeks in an emergency center run by the Philippine Embassy due to labor problems, and nearly half have flown back to Manila, Migrant Workers Undersecretary Hans Cacdac said.

Kuwait's ambassador to Manila, Musaed Saleh Althwaikh, expressed his condolences and assured Ople that Ranara's "tragic passing" was an isolated case.

"Kuwaiti society is shocked and saddened to hear about the demise of Mrs. Ranara," the ambassador said in the letter, copies of which were provided to journalists. "Our justice system will not lose sight in ensuring justice for Mrs. Ranara."

In 2018, then-President Rodrigo Duterte banned the deployment of workers to Kuwait after a Filipino housemaid, Joanna Demafelis, was found dead and mutilated inside a freezer in an abandoned apartment. The ban was eventually lifted.

posed on regular citizens.

### China announces resumption of visas for Japanese

**TOKYO** (AP)—China announced it was resuming issuing visas for Japanese travelers beginning Sunday, ending its nearly three-week suspension in an apparent protest of Tokyo's tougher COVID-19 entry requirements for tourists from China. The decision was announced in a statement posted on the Chinese Embassy's website. China stopped issuing new visas in Japan on Jan. 10 in apparent retaliation for Tokyo's requirement of additional tests for Chinese tourists in late December, ahead of Lunar New Year holidays. Japan cited soaring infections in China after it abruptly eased coronavirus restrictions as well as scarce COVID-19 data from Beijing. Japan reopened its borders for individual tourists in October, allowing travelers with proof of vaccination instead of testing at airports unless they show symptoms. But on Dec. 30, Japan required all travelers from China to show pre-departure negative tests and take an additional test upon arrival.

### Bus falls off bridge, catches fire in Pakistan, killing 40

**QUETTA, Pakistan** (AP)—A passenger bus crashed into

a pillar and fell off a bridge, catching fire and killing 40 people in southern Pakistan on Sunday, a government official said. The bus was carrying 44 passengers from Quetta in Balochistan province to Karachi in neighboring Sindh province. The accident was near the town of Bela, in Lasbela district. Hamza Anjum Nadeem, assistant commissioner in Bela, said the bodies of 40 people, including women and children, were recovered. Four injured passengers were rescued. "The accident happened due to over-speeding and the bus crashed into the pillar of a bridge. It caught fire soon after falling (off the bridge)," he said. Images from the crash site showed what was left of the charred bus lying near the bridge. The recovered remains of some of the dead are lined up in rows nearby. Nadeem said the bodies were charred beyond recognition and are being transported to Karachi for DNA sampling.

After identification, the bodies will be handed over to the victims' relatives. Firefighters and workers from the Lasbela Welfare Trust and the Edhi Welfare Foundation carried out the rescue operation. The chief minister of Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo, expressed his sorrow for the loss of life and ordered authorities to provide the best medical facilities to the injured.

# World

## NZ volunteer killed helping civilians in Ukraine mourned



AP

People lay flowers to commemorate British volunteers Chris Parry and Andrew Bagshaw, killed in Ukraine's war-torn east, during a commemoration service in a refectory near St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, Ukraine, Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023.

**KYIV, Ukraine** (AP)—Friends and volunteers gathered Sunday at Kyiv's St Sophia's Cathedral to say goodbye to Andrew Bagshaw, a New Zealand scientist who was killed in Ukraine with another volunteer while they

were trying to evacuate people from a front-line town.

Bagshaw, 48, a dual New Zealand-British citizen, and British volunteer Christopher Parry, 28, went missing this month while heading to the town of Soledar, in the eastern Donetsk region, where heavy fighting was taking place.

Volunteers spoke of their memories of Bagshaw and read tributes from his family.

Nikolletta Stoyanova, a friend in Ukraine, shared memories of his bravery.

"Even if no one wanted

### Iran says drone attack targets defense facility in Isfahan

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates** (AP)—Bomb-carrying drones targeted an Iranian defense factory in the central city of Isfahan overnight, authorities said Sunday, causing some damage at the plant amid heightened regional and international tensions engulfing the Islamic Republic.

The Iranian Defense Ministry offered no information on who it suspected carried out the attack, which came as a refinery fire separately broke out in the country's northwest and a 5.9 magnitude earthquake struck nearby, killing three people.

However, Tehran has been targeted in suspected Israeli drone strikes amid a shadow war with its Middle East rival as its nuclear deal with world powers collapsed.

to go to Soledar, they can do that. Because if he understood that someone needs help, they need to do this help for these people," Stoyanova said, speaking in English.

Bagshaw's father, Phil, told reporters in New Zealand that his son wanted to do something to help.

"He was a very intelligent man, and a very independent thinker," he said. "And he thought a long time about the situation in Ukraine, and he believed it to be immoral. He felt the only thing he could do of a constructive nature was to go there and help people."

Ukrainian police said Jan. 9 that they lost contact with Bagshaw and Parry after the two headed for Soledar. Their bodies were later recovered. A Ukrainian official

meanwhile, tensions also remain high with neighboring Azerbaijan after a gunman attacked that country's embassy in Tehran, killing its security chief and wounding two others.

Details on the Isfahan attack, which happened around 11:30 p.m. Saturday, remained scarce. A Defense Ministry statement described three drones being launched at the facility, with two of them successfully shot down. A third apparently made it through to strike the building, causing "minor damage" to its roof and wounding no one, the ministry said.

The state-run IRNA news agency later described the drones as "quadcopters equipped with bomblets." Quadcopters, which get their

reported Wednesday that the defending forces made an organized retreat from the salt-mining town.

In a Jan. 24 statement, Parry's family said he was "drawn to Ukraine in March in its darkest hour." They said he'd "helped those most in need, saving over 400 lives plus many abandoned animals."

Friends said the men's bodies would be handed over to relatives in the U.K.

In the south of Ukraine, Russian forces on Sunday heavily shelled the city of Kherson, killing three people and wounding six others, the regional administration said. It said the shelling damaged a hospital, school, bus station, post office, bank and residential buildings.

name from having four rotors, typically operate from short ranges by remote control. Iranian state television later aired footage of debris from the drones, which resembled commercially available quadcopters.

State TV aired mobile phone video apparently showing the moment that drone struck along the busy Imam Khomeini Expressway that heads northwest out of Isfahan, one of several ways for drivers to go to the holy city of Qom and Tehran, Iran's capital. A small crowd stood gathered, drawn by anti-aircraft fire, watching as an explosion and sparks struck a dark building.

"Oh my God! That was a drone, wasn't it?" the man filming shouts. "Yeah, it was a drone."

# Overdrive

By LARRY PRINTZ  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

How rarely do we genuinely hear good news? It seems that most news sources delight in torturing their readers or viewers with journalism sure to outrage, titillate, disgust, annoy or anger their readers. I don't know about you, but I am ready to hear something happy.

So, it's with great delight that I can report that for 2023, the Mazda CX-5 crossover hasn't changed, except for the addition of a white paint option—and that's good.

Like other Mazda vehicles, this one punches above its weight. I had to pick up some friends in Palm Beach—friends whose own automotive corral is filled with names like Mercedes-Benz, Jaguar, Lexus and others. Climbing into the test vehicle, admittedly a top-of-the-line model, they were blown away by the cabin's fit and finish for the price, with materials that seemed as nice as any luxury car. It's a feeling reinforced by the CX-5's clean contemporary cabin aesthetics.

At a mere 180 inches long and 72.6 inches wide, the CX-5 proves unexpectedly accommodating and roomy, with room for four, or five if they're children or overly friendly. The cargo area is just as ample at 30 cubic feet with the rear seats in use. The roof is rated to carry 165 pounds when equipped with roof rails.

It was quiet and comfortable, with my friends comparing the CX-5 to vehicles that cost twice as much but aren't twice as good. Padded sur-

faces and refined finishes are everywhere throughout the cabin.

A 10.25-inch full-color center display is artlessly plopped atop the instrument panel, controlled by a rotary knob on the center console and equipped with Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, wireless phone charger, and Bluetooth. Given the cabin's small size, a touch-screen would be more ideal, especially given the system's chunky user interface that skewers an otherwise ideal driving experience. A stellar-sounding Bose 10-speaker audio system is standard on Premium and higher trim levels. Two USB ports are fitted front and rear, except on the base model, which only has them up front.

All Mazda CX-5s come with a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine. In S, S Select, S Preferred, S Carbon Edition, S Premium and S Premium Plus trim levels, the normally aspirated power plant is rated 187 horsepower and 186 pound-feet of torque. Turbo and Turbo Signature models come with a turbocharged version of the same engine that puts out a respectable 227 horsepower and a massive 310 pound-feet of torque with 87 octane gasoline. Use 93 octane and you'll get 256 horsepower and 320 pound-feet of torque. All models come with a six-speed automatic transmission and all-wheel drive. Most trims come



MAZDA/TNS  
The 2023 Mazda CX-5 instrument panel has a 10.25-inch full-color center display equipped with Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, wireless phone charger, and Bluetooth.

ANNA JOZWIAK/MAZDA/TNS  
For 2023, the Mazda CX-5 crossover hasn't changed, except for the addition of a white paint option.

## A bit of good news courtesy of the 2023 Mazda CX-5

with 17-inch wheels; Carbon, Premium and Turbo models have 19-inch footwear.

Standard driver assistance safety features include radar cruise control, blind spot monitoring, rear cross-traffic alert, and lane departure warning with lane keep assist. Turbo Signature models like our test vehicle include traffic sign recognition, front and rear parking sensors, traffic jam assist, and driver attention alert.

Thanks to its accurate steering and modest size, the CX-5 is responsive and fun to drive, thanks to the powerful turbocharged powerplant. The automatic transmission may only have six cogs, but it makes the vehicle respond more quickly.

But its athleticism doesn't come at the expense of ride comfort. It has a surprisingly calm, grown-up demeanor that doesn't get flustered when thrown into corners, where it confidently handles the tarmac and keeps unwanted body motions to a minimum. Braking performance is excellent.

And it's really quiet, surprisingly so. And while our top-of-the-line test vehicle broke the \$40,000 barrier, it had everything you'd want, including a sunroof, heated seats and steering wheel, etc. But base models start at a far more reasonable \$26,700 before destination fee, options or sales tax. That's quite a deal.

It's hard to imagine that a

compact SUV with this much poise, refinement and speed should cost as little as it does in today's market, which charges far more for vehicles with far fewer attributes. Not only is the CX-5 recommended by Consumer Reports; it also has a five-star overall crash test

rating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and an Insurance Institute for Highway Safety "Top Safety Pick+" designation, it's top rating. Yet despite all that, it's truly fun to drive, yet practical and very good looking.

Now, isn't that good news?

### NUTS & BOLTS

#### 2023 Mazda CX-5 2.5 Turbo Signature AWD

- Length/Width/Height: 180.2/72.6/66.3 inches
- Ground clearance: 7.9 inches
- Engine: 2.5-liter turbocharged four-cylinder
- Horsepower/Torque: 227/310 pound-feet
- Payload: 972 pounds
- Cargo capacity: 30-59.3 cubic feet
- EPA fuel economy (city/highway): 22/27 mpg
- Towing capacity: 2,000 pounds

## Mice in the car

**Q: We have a 2018 Chrysler Pacifica minivan. It is parked inside where there are mice. Within the last two weeks we have found evidence of mice in the cabin. No serious damage to date, just tissue and the like destroyed. I changed the cabin air filter thinking they were gaining access there but there was no evidence. We had the in-dash computer replaced this past year and some work done on the stow-and-go rear seats. Could there be openings where the wiring harnesses pass through the firewall or other locations? Any other suggestions on where to look? I certainly do not want them damaging wiring or, worse, crawling up my leg while I am driving!**

**B.S., Hennepin, Illinois**

**A:** As Jinks the cat used to say on the old "Huckleberry

Hound" cartoon show, "I hate meees to pieces." Mice can squeeze through a hole a quarter-inch in diameter. That's about the size of a No. 2 pencil. Finding a leak that small isn't easy. Professional technicians use an ultrasound detector that picks up the frequency of leaking air from window or door seals. Check with your local shop or car dealer.

■ ■ ■

**Q: I wish car makers would fit two sun visors on the driver's side: one for the windshield and one for the driver's side window. On a road with twists and turns, you're constantly changing the sun visor from one side to the other, which is distracting at best, and even dangerous at worst. One hand on the wheel, one hand switching the visor, and the blazing sun shining right in your face**



CHRISTA EDER/DREAMSTIME/TNS  
Mice can squeeze through a hole a quarter-inch in diameter.

Professional technicians may be needed to find any leaks.

**is not a good situation to deal with. In these days of all the high tech stuff we have on cars, it seems an extra sun visor on the driver's side window would be a simple and prudent feature to offer. What do you think?**

**D.P., Spring Grove, Illinois**

**A:** Although some luxury cars have both front and side sun visors, there are aftermarket accessories that do the job for a lot less than trading up to a

Bentley. Those "baby on board" shades come to mind. Check around at your local auto parts store or a big box variety store's automotive section. Solutions vary from folding fabric shades to ones that resemble Venetian blinds. I have used static-cling, neutral density plastic film a few times. Warning: Don't roll the window down with an accessory shade in place.

■ ■ ■

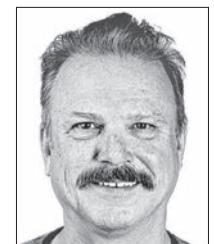
**Q: I have a 2017 RAV4**

### MOTORMOUTH

By BOB WEBER

Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.



**hybrid with radar-controlled cruise control that automatically adjusts speed based on traffic. If I have the cruise set at 70, and traffic starts to slow, the radar detects the change and the car slows. My question is do the brake lights go on in this situation?**

**B.P., Park Ridge, Illinois**

**A:** Yes, the brake lights come on if the cruise control system kicks in for deceleration.

■ ■ ■

**Q: Regarding the reader**

**with a 128 GB thumb drive that won't play in the 2019 Hyundai, I ran into a similar situation with a 128 GB drive on my 2020 Nissan Rogue. Only a 64 GB or smaller drive can be read by the system. I have no idea why the size of the drive would matter.**

**S.D., Andover, Minnesota**

**A:** Hmm. I guess size does matter. I haven't heard of this this, but it is certainly worth passing along. Thanks.

# Life & Style

## ‘Avatar 2’ tops box office for seventh weekend

By LINDSEY BAHR  
AP FILM WRITER

“Avatar: The Way of Water” claimed the No. 1 spot on the domestic box office charts for the seventh weekend in a row with an additional \$15.7 million, according to studio estimates on Sunday.

It was a quiet weekend overall, notable mostly for the Hindi language blockbuster “Pathaan” that broke into the top five and the post-Oscar nominations rereleases of films like “Everything Everywhere All At Once” and “The Fabelmans.”

“Avatar 2’s” first-place North American run has only been matched by the first “Avatar,” and, in the past 25 years, bested by “Titanic” (which stayed in first place for 15 weeks). All three were directed by James Cameron.

Globally, “The Way of Water” has now grossed an estimated \$2.1 billion, passing “Star Wars: The Force Awakens,” to become the fourth-

highest grossing film of all time (of which Cameron has directed three).

“James Cameron just keeps ticking off all the records and milestones,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. “And it’s still got a wide-open marketplace.”

Second place went to Universal and DreamWorks’ family-oriented offering “Puss In Boots: The Last Wish,” which made \$10.6 million in its sixth weekend. The animated spinoff has earned over \$140.8 million in North America and was recently made available to stream at home, too.

Third place went to Sony’s “A Man Called Otto” with \$6.8 million from 3,957 locations. The meme-able horror “M3GAN,” a Universal release, snuck into fourth place with \$6.4 million in its fourth weekend, bringing its domestic total to \$82.3 million.

The Indian film “Pathaan,” starring Shah Rukh Khan in his first role in five years, settled

in fifth place with \$5.9 million from only 695 screens.

“A top five appearance is really impressive,” Dergarabedian said, noting that the marketplace over the past several years has presented opportunities for Indian films to break into the domestic top 10.

Neon also launched the horror movie “Infinity Pool,” written and directed by Brandon Cronenberg and starring Mia Goth and Alexander Skarsgård, in 1,853 locations following its Sundance debut. It made an estimated \$2.7 million. The romantic comedy “Maybe I Do,” with Diane Keaton, Richard Gere and Susan Sarandon, made \$562,000 from 465 screens. And Lukas Dhont’s Cannes-winning boyhood drama “Close” opened on four screens in New York and Los Angeles, earning \$68,143.

Many studios boasting best picture nominees also chose to capitalize on the buzz of Tuesday’s Oscar nominations with sizable re-releases. “Ev-

erything Everywhere All At Once,” which got a leading 11 nominations, came back to theaters in force playing on 1,400 screens where it earned another \$1 million. The A24 release has made \$71 million domestically to date. Steven Spielberg’s “The Fabelmans,”

nominated for seven Oscars, also expanded to 1,962 screens in North America and took in an additional \$760,000, bringing its domestic total to \$16 million. And Sarah Polley’s “Women Talking” also added a few hundred screens, earning \$1 million over the weekend. It’s made \$2.4 million to date. The Oscar boosts could continue over the coming weeks, too — the show isn’t until March 12.

“We are seeing in real time the halo effect of the Oscar nominations on these best picture nominees,” Dergarabedian said. “The Oscar bounce is back, something we haven’t seen over the past couple of years.”

Several of the highest profile releases of the weekend were both star-driven comedies that went straight to streaming: Netflix had “You People,” with Eddie Murphy, and Jennifer Coolidge.

Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Jonah Hill and Lauren London and Amazon Prime Video offered “Shotgun Wedding,” with Jennifer Lopez, Josh Duhamel and Jennifer Coolidge.

## Bob Odenkirk is the Hasty Pudding’s Man of the Year

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP)—

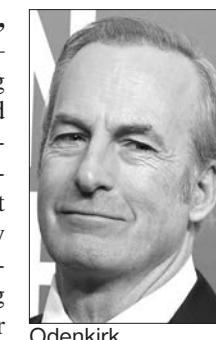
Award-winning actor, writer and bestselling author Bob Odenkirk, perhaps best known as shady lawyer Saul Goodman on “Breaking Bad” and “Better Call Saul,” was named 2023 Man

of the Year by Harvard University’s Hasty Pudding Theatricals on Thursday.

Odenkirk is scheduled to receive his Pudding Pot award at a celebratory roast Feb. 2, after which he will attend a preview of Hasty Pudding Theatricals’ 174th production, “COSMIC RELIEF!,” the group announced.

“When choosing our 2023 Man of the Year, I immediately knew we better call Bob Odenkirk,” producer Aidan Golub said in a statement. “We’re cooking up a lot of surprises to celebrate Mr. Odenkirk’s contributions to the world of comedy both in front of and behind the camera.”

Previous winners of the Woman of the Year Award include Meryl Streep, Viola Davis and Debbie Reynolds. Bob Odenkirk was named the 2023 Hasty Pudding Man of the Year last week. He will be honored on Feb. 2.



Odenkirk

ed out a Man of the Year Award since 1967. Last year’s recipient was Jason Bateman, and previous honorees include Bob Hope, Dustin Hoffman and Sean Connery.

The awards are given out to people who have made lasting and impressive contributions to the world of entertainment.

Odenkirk reprised the role of Saul Goodman, aka Jimmy McGill, in “Better Call Saul,” which earned him three Critics’ Choice TV awards and multiple Emmy, Golden Globe, and SAG Award nominations.

He is also the star and executive producer of “Lucky Hank,” adapted from the novel “Straight Man” by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Russo, which is scheduled to premier on AMC and AMC+ on March 19.

Some of his other acting credits include “Nobody,” “Mr. Show with Bob and David” and “Girlfriend’s Day.”

He received two Emmy Awards for his comedic writing for “Saturday Night Live” in 1989 and for “The Ben Stiller Show” in 1993.

## Coolidge named Harvard’s Hasty Pudding Woman of the Year

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP)—Jennifer Coolidge, who saw a career resurgence following her Emmy-winning turn as Tanya McQuoid-Hunt in the acclaimed HBO series “The White Lotus,” was named the 2023 Woman of the Year by Harvard University’s Hasty Pudding Theatricals.

The Pudding is the oldest theatrical organization in the nation and one of the oldest in the world. Since 1951, it has bestowed this award annually on women “who have made

lasting and impressive contributions to the world of entertainment.”

Coolidge, who also played Stifler’s sultry mom in “American Pie” and sage manicurist Paulette in the “Legally Blonde” movies, grew up in the Boston area.

“We are so excited to welcome Jennifer Coolidge back to her hometown and to Har-



Coolidge

vard, the iconic setting of Legally Blonde,” Man and Woman of the Year coordinator Maya Dubin said in a press release. “Her glittering personality and comedic presence are so Pudding.”

Coolidge will be honored with a parade through Harvard Square on Feb. 4 followed by a roast when she will be presented her Pudding Pot.

Her other film credits include roles in “Best In Show,” “A Mighty Wind” and “Shotgun Wedding” while she has appeared multiple television shows including “Seinfeld,” “2 Broke Girls” and “Nip/Tuck.”

Previous winners of the Woman of the Year Award include Meryl Streep, Viola Davis and Debbie Reynolds.

Bob Odenkirk was named the 2023 Hasty Pudding Man of the Year last week. He will be honored on Feb. 2.

## Dysfunctional family labels stable brother ‘selfish’

**D**EAR ABBY: My two siblings and I were raised by an abusive, alcoholic father. Predictably, it has adversely affected our mental health adversely.

One sibling struggles with alcoholism and substance abuse. The other has a personality disorder and cannot maintain stable relationships. I cope with comparatively fewer severe issues, but I still must work hard to sustain a marriage and my career and raise healthy children. It isn’t easy.

My siblings’ issues have disrupted my emotional health and family life, which is why I keep them at a distance. Lately, they have expressed feeling abandoned. Other family members call me selfish and say I’m obligated to help them because I’m “the successful one.” I do feel some guilt for not helping more, as we all survived the same toxic childhood. Yet, my emotional bandwidth is limited. Frankly, people with alcoholism and personality disorders are hard to be around, even if they are family. Is it selfish to prioritize my well-being by maintaining distance from my siblings?

THEIR BROTHER

**DEAR BROTHER:** Your first priority must be your emotional health. Next should be the well-being of your spouse and children and the career that enables you to provide for them. If maintaining some distance from

these siblings is selfish, then call it “enlightened” selfishness. Help them to the extent you can, but do not allow yourself to be emotionally arm-twisted by other relatives who remain on the sidelines.

■■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** I’ve lived in my apartment for almost 10 years and had the same downstairs neighbor since I moved in. About three years ago, I began noticing an odor coming from her apartment. It’s hard to describe other than the worst body odor imaginable. It’s so bad that I can’t open my sliding door or windows in the summer because the smell drifts into my home. She is not the type of person I can approach about this no matter how gently I word it. I’m to the point where I feel I should file a complaint with management. It could be a hoarding situation, which could lead to health issues or pests. There are only four units in my building, and I know my other two neighbors would never complain. It would be obvious it was me, which would make for a very uncomfortable living situation. So far, no one else I know has had advice, so I am desperate for any suggestions.

DISGUSTED IN OREGON

**DEAR DISGUSTED:** Have you spoken to your other neighbors about this? Have they noticed the odor, too?

## DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



If any of them tells you yes, then absolutely discuss what has been happening, and for how long, with the building management company. There may, indeed, be health and safety issues involved. (Could she have a dead animal in there?) Please do not remain silent. For everyone’s sake, this should be checked out.

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Watterson



## Garfield®



By Jim Davis



## Adam@home



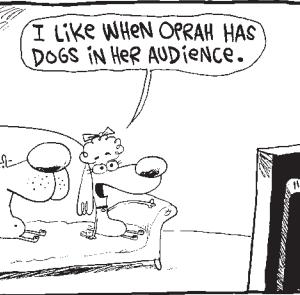
By Bryan Basset



## The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy



## CROSSWORD

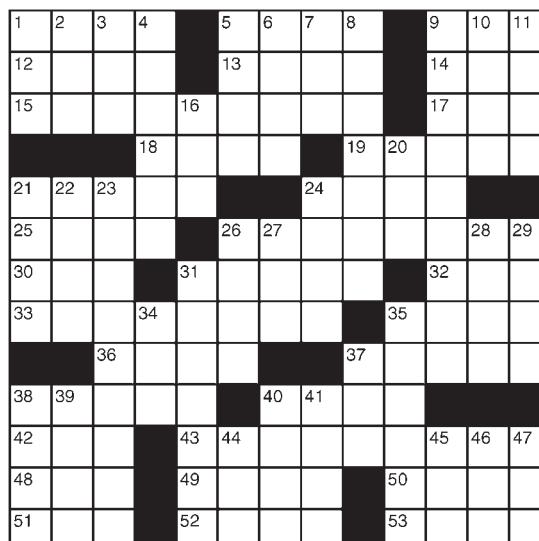
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	1 "I did it!"	37 Supermarket section	38 "Cheers" server	40 Ledge	42 Soul, to Camus	43 TV show inter-rupter	48 "Diamonds" singer	49 Human rights lawyer	50 Within (Pref.)	51 Request	52 Adorable	53 Miami-	— County	16 Blubber
5 Feudal laborer														
9 British big shot														
12 Privy to														
13 Pond duck														
14 Past														
15 Three-time Masters champ														
17 401(k) alter-native														
18 Research sites														
19 Annoys														
21 Doctrine														
24 Squabble														
25 Chopping tools														
26 Enduring literary works														
30 IRS employee														
31 Strapped for cash														
32 Asian language														
33 Tabasco, for one														
35 Liberty —														
36 Crop-growing tract														

Solution time: 22 mins.



Yesterday's answer 1-31



For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**STUMPED?**

## CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Mario Williams, 38; Justin Timberlake, 42; Kerri Washington, 46; Portia de Rossi, 50.

**Happy Birthday:** Follow the path of least resistance. Explore the unfamiliar, and you'll develop concepts that will make life easier. Invest time and money in what's important to you. Keep moving toward your target with an open mind and positive attitude. Relationships will stabilize if you are willing to give and take. Don't jeopardize your health; protect against illness and injury. Your numbers are 5, 11, 16, 28, 35, 38, 47.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19): Turn an idea into something with moneymaking potential. Hone your skills and present what you have to offer. Recognize who needs your help and who intends to take advantage of your kindness and good nature before you commit. **★☆☆**

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20): A proposal someone makes will tempt you. Rely on yourself, not others, if you want to get ahead. Set your own goals instead of trying to follow in someone's footsteps. Don't let someone's bragging make you feel inferior. **★☆☆**

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20): Don't give up when you should get moving. Home, family and getting things in order will help put your mind at ease. An emotional issue will escalate if you let anger lead the way. Use moderation and your imagination, and success will be yours. **★☆☆**

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22): Make a financial move that lowers taxes. You can sell items you no longer use and

ease the stress the changing economy brings. A partnership will prompt you to reevaluate prospects and protect what's yours. Personal gain is apparent. **★★★**

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22): By offering your services, you'll position yourself for success. Be true to yourself and do the best job possible. Just take on what you can handle and do your best; your effort will improve your profile and credibility. Manage money wisely. **★★★★**

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Dig in and live up to your promises. Don't expect someone to swoop in and take over. Plan strategically and execute your plans flawlessly, and progress will be yours. **★☆**

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Inconsistency will be your downfall. Gather information and decide your next move based on your findings, feelings and what you want. Don't feel the need to give in to someone trying to bully you. Honesty will clear up an emotional setback. **★★★★★**

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Be a good listener. Size up situations and keep an open mind. Go directly to the source to avoid misinformation. You may need to visit someone in person to get a clear picture of their situation and how it affects you. **★☆☆**

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Leave nothing to chance. Ask for proof in writing in order to avoid disappointment. Saying yes to someone before you have all the facts will leave you in a precarious position. A job prospect looks inviting but difficult. **★☆☆**

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY



COURTESY 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Go with the flow, find your rhythm and make your mark. Take care of business before moving on to something that's more fun. Don't let a money matter disrupt a friendship or your plans. Don't trade in one set of problems for another. **★☆☆**

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): A curious mind will lead to innovative options. Don't be afraid to do things differently. Set a course that helps you expand your qualifications. A change at home will turn out better than anticipated. Believe in yourself. **★★★★★**

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20): Put your to-do list in order of importance and start working toward an end goal. The proper sequence of events will make your life easier and encourage others to participate. A friendship will be affected by your course of action. **★☆**

**Birthday Baby:** You are curious, sensitive and intuitive. You are determined and persistent.

★: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ♦♦: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★: Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

## SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

			4	9				
5			6		7	2		
9	2				3			
6			8					
7	2		9	4		1	8	
			7					2
	4				1	5		
7	5		2			9		
		1	3					

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

1	3	2	9	5	6	7	4	8
6	7	5	8	4	3	1	9	2
9	8	4	1	2	7	5	6	3
3	4	7	5	1	2	6	8	9
8	2	1	6	3	9	4	7	5
5	6	9	4	7	8	2	3	1
7	1	8	2	9	4	3	5	6
4	5	6	3	8	1	9	2	7
2	9	3	7	6	5	8	1	4

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## WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SQUALL WARNINGS!

Solution: 9 letters

D	R	A	Z	A	H	U	R	R	I	C	A	N	E	L
R	O	D	A	N	R	O	T	R	E	G	I	O	N	Y
I	A	W	O	N	S	E	A	S	O	N	T	O	G	R
V	D	S	S	A	F	E	T							

# Chiefs top Bengals 23-20 on last-second kick for AFC title



KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Patrick Mahomes was forced to rely on his badly sprained right ankle rather than his strong right arm when the Kansas City Chiefs were desperately driving with a chance to win the AFC championship.

The All-Pro quarterback, missing three wide receivers to injuries and battered himself, took off on a third-down play near midfield in another gut-check game with the Cincinnati Bengals. Mahomes strained to reach the mark he needed and was headed out of bounds when he felt the hands of Joseph Ossai send him sprawling into the bench.

The mad dash, coupled with the 15-yard penalty for a late hit, was all Kansas City needed.

Harrison Butker strode confidently onto the field, sent a 45-yard kick through cold, gusting wind over the crossbar with 3 seconds to go, and put the Chiefs back in the Super Bowl for the third time in four years with a 23-20 victory.

"I don't think we have any cigars," Mahomes said with a smile, "but we'll be ready to go in the Super Bowl."

It was vindication for the AFC West champions, who had lost three straight to their newfound nemeses, including a three-point overtime loss to Cincinnati in last year's conference title game. All of those defeats were by three points.

Now, the Chiefs are headed back to the big game.

Awaiting them is coach Andy Reid's old team, the Eagles, in the first matchup of Black quarterbacks in the Super Bowl with Mahomes and



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes signals teammates during the first half of the NFL AFC Championship playoff football game against the Cincinnati Bengals, Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo. AP

Philadelphia's Jalen Hurts. It will also feature a brother-against-brother showdown between Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce and Philadelphia center Jason Kelce.

"I've watched them all year," Mahomes said. "It's going to be a great challenge for us. But I'm going to celebrate this first."

Mahomes, who hurt his ankle against Jacksonville in the divisional round, threw for 326 yards and two touchdowns, even though he was missing three of his wide receivers to injuries by the end. Marquez Valdes-Scantling led with 116 yards and a touchdown, while Travis Kelce—bad back and all—had seven catches for 78

yards and a score.

"It's a tough bunch. My heart goes out to them, man, they're tough guys," Reid said. "They worked so hard this week. Pat and Kelce were both banged up a little bit. They pushed through and great things happened."

The Chiefs also managed to shut the mouths of the Bengals, some of whom had taken to calling their home "Burrowhead" for Joe Burrow, who had never lost to Kansas City. Even Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval started in on the trash talk.

"I've got some wise words for that Cincinnati mayor," Kelce said. "Know your role and shut your mouth, you jabroni!"

Burrow, who was sacked five times and wobbly by the end, finished with 270 yards passing to go with a touchdown and two interceptions for the Bengals. Tee Higgins had six catches for 83 yards and the score.

"We're not going to make it about one play. There was plenty of plays we left on the field today that could have put us in a better position," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said. "The character of this football team, that's never going to change. We've got the right people in the locker room, the right men leading this team and this organization."

"I know that this is a team

that our city and our fan base can be proud of," Taylor added. "They represent themselves the right way, and we're going to fight, scratch and claw to be back in this position next year."

The Chiefs were able to do early what the Buffalo Bills could not in last week's divisional round: They ran roughshod over an ailing Bengals offensive line missing two starters to injury with another bothered by a sore knee.

Burrow was sacked three times in the first quarter alone and the Bengals offense did not gain a single yard.

Mahomes looked just fine on his sore ankle in leading Kansas City to a field goal on its opening possession. When the Chiefs got the ball back, Mahomes did it again, but only after Kadarius Toney failed to pull in a nifty throw for a would-be touchdown—the incompleteness was upheld upon review.

Cincinnati finally got moving in the second quarter, but it also had to settle for Evan McPherson's chip-shot field goal.

So much for two of the league's highest-scoring offenses.

The Chiefs finally reached the end zone late in the second quarter when Mahomes hit Kelce, loosely covered by Jessie Bates III, with a fourth-down throw for the touchdown. The Bengals drove 90 yards in the closing minutes, but only added a field goal to get within 13-6 at the break.

Turns out their offense was just hitting its stride. And another classic was brewing.

After the Chiefs went three-and-out to start the second half, Burrow led the Bengals

downfield, bolting through a yawning hole in the defense for a third-down conversion before hitting Higgins from 27 yards out to knot the game 13-all.

Mahomes, suddenly down three wide receivers to injuries and beginning to limp, gamely pressed on. He answered Burrow with a touchdown drive of his own, capped by a third-down throw to Valdes-Scantling to regain the lead.

The Chiefs had a chance to gain some breathing room later in the third quarter, but Mahomes somehow lost control of the ball before throwing a pass and the Bengals pounced on the fumble. Six players later—including an audacious fourth-down throw from Burrow to Ja'Marr Chase—Samaje Perine ran into the end zone to tie it at 20.

Burrow gave the Chiefs a chance when his deep throw to Higgins on third down was batted into the air and picked by rookie cornerback Josh Williams. Mahomes managed to move the Chiefs past midfield, but two runs went nowhere and his third-down throw to Jerick McKinnon was well short, forcing them to punt in Bengals territory.

Kansas City's defense held, though, got a crucial sack from Chris Jones to force a punt with 39 seconds left, and shaky return man Skyy Moore broke free for 29 yards on the return. That gave Mahomes and the offense one more try.

"It was a tough road to get here. To win 10 in a row, it was a pretty incredible feat," Taylor said. "We came up short. We wanted to play longer than that, but really proud of these guys."

quiet with nervous energy since a touchdown on the opening drive.

Sanders broke free for a 13-yard run for a 14-7 lead, concluding a 14-play, 75-yard drive extended by three 49ers penalties.

Johnson bobbled a shotgun snap and fumbled on the next drive, and Reddick—the free-agent pickup from Carolina having one of the great defensive seasons in franchise history—recovered at the San Francisco 30. Boston Scott scooted 10 yards for a touchdown and 21-7 lead.

Even with Hurts almost a non-factor—he had 97 yards passing in the first half—the Eagles were firmly in control. His 1-yard rushing touchdown on Philadelphia's signature rugby-style QB sneak made it 28-7 late in the third quarter.

"We've got a chance to go out there and win it all," Hurts said. "So we want to go prepare to go do that."

**PHILADELPHIA** (AP)—Jalen Hurts can conduct a sing-along about as well as he can orchestrate the kind of punishing scoring drives that sent the Eagles into the Super Bowl.

At the end of one more triumph, Hurts stood on the stage on the field—as his Eagles teammates passed around the NFC championship trophy—and clutched a microphone in front of what was suddenly Philadelphia's largest karaoke joint. His rendition of the team fight song was a tad off-key.

Hurts may not sing as well as he can score, but it was another memorable moment in a season full of them. And the Eagles don't believe they're done yet.

"We've got new moments," Hurts said. "New moments and new times."

Hurts had one of Philadelphia's four rushing touchdowns and the Eagles soared into the Super Bowl, forc-

## Hurts, Eagles soar into Super Bowl, rout 49ers for NFC title

ing both of San Francisco's quarterbacks out of the game with injuries and beating the wounded 49ers 31-7 in the NFC championship game on Sunday.

The Eagles, who won the Super Bowl five years ago with a different coach and quarterback, will try to do it again behind the formidable duo of Hurts and coach Nick Sirianni. Philadelphia will play former Eagles coach Andy Reid's Kansas City Chiefs.

"We get to do it because we did it better than anyone in the NFC this year," Sirianni said. Hurts had a modest game by his standards after a season in which he was a finalist for MVP. He was 15-of-25 passing for 121 yards and ran for 39, improving to 16-1 as a starter this season. The Eagles (16-3) lost two games that he missed with a

sprained right shoulder.

Hurts sat alone at his locker dressed all in purple and he took a few puffs of a cigar as the Eagles celebrated around him. He understood there was one more game to win.

"I never knew how far we'd go," Hurts said, "but I never said it couldn't be done."

Miles Sanders ran for two touchdowns and linebacker Haason Reddick made the hit that forced 49ers rookie quarterback Brock Purdy out of the game with an elbow injury. Reddick also recovered a fumble by Purdy's replacement, Josh Johnson, who later suffered a concussion.

That forced Purdy back into the game, but his injury was clearly a factor as the 49ers all but gave up on the passing game, even while trailing by multiple scores. Purdy said he was unable to throw the ball more than 10 yards after his

elbow got hurt.

San Francisco's bad luck at quarterback was finally too much to overcome as its 12-game win streak ended. The Niners (15-5) lost both Trey Lance and Jimmy Garoppolo to season-ending injuries, and Purdy—the final pick in April's draft—lost as a starter for the first time.

Philadelphia police greased traffic and light poles in what proved again to be a futile attempt to slow the postgame revelry. The city now has its beloved Birds in the Super Bowl just three months after the Philadelphia Phillies reached the World Series.

"When you guys go into our indoor (practice facility), there's always that picture in the back part of it of the 2017 NFC championship game, and it's just the electricity of the stadium," said Sirianni, who

was hired two years ago to replace the Eagles' Super Bowl-winning coach, Doug Pederson. "We're looking forward to getting another picture up there of this special moment that we had."

The game disintegrated in the waning minutes and Philadelphia's K'Von Wallace and San Francisco's Trent Williams were ejected for their roles in a brawl. Williams yanked Wallace from behind and slammed him to the ground.

The moment only seemed to rile up Eagles fans even more as they soon waved their green towels and went wild as confetti fluttered around them.

"We've got one more game for the rest of our lives," Sanders said.

The Eagles broke the game open in the final two minutes of the first half, getting a rise out of a crowd that had been

# Djokovic claims 10th Australian Open title, 22nd Slam



**M E L -  
B O U R N E ,  
A u s t r a l i a**

(AP)—Novak Djokovic climbed into the Rod Laver Arena stands to celebrate his 10th Australian Open championship and record-tying 22nd Grand Slam title Sunday and, after jumping and pumping his fists with his team, he collapsed onto his back, crying.

When he returned to the playing surface, Djokovic sat on his sideline bench, buried his face in a white towel and sobbed some more.

This trip to Australia was far more successful than that of a year ago—when he was deported because he was not vaccinated against COVID-19—although difficult in its own ways: a bad hamstring; some off-court tumult involving his father. Yet Djokovic accomplished all he could have possibly wanted in his return: He resumed his winning ways at Melbourne Park and made it back to the top of tennis, declaring: “This probably is the, I would say, biggest victory of my life.”

Only briefly challenged in the final, Djokovic was simply better at the most crucial moments and beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 7-6 (4), 7-6 (5). As a bonus, Djokovic will vault from No. 5 to No. 1 in the ATP rankings, a spot he already has held for more weeks than any other man.

“This has been one of the

most challenging tournaments I’ve ever played in my life, considering the circumstances. Not playing last year; coming back this year,” Djokovic said, wearing a zip-up white jacket with a “22” on his chest. “And I want to thank all the people that made me feel welcome, made me feel comfortable, to be in Melbourne, to be in Australia.”

The 35-year-old from Serbia stretched his unbeaten streak in Melbourne to 28 matches, the longest run there in the Open era, which dates to 1968. He adds trophy No. 10 to the seven from Wimbledon, three from the U.S. Open—where he also was absent last year because of no coronavirus shots—and two from the French Open, to match rival Rafael Nadal for the most by a man.

Only two women—Margaret Court, with 24, and Serena Williams, with 23—are ahead of him.

This was also the 93rd ATP tour-level title for Djokovic, breaking a tie with Nadal for the fourth-most.

“I would like to thank you for pushing our sport so far,” Tsitsipas told Djokovic.

“He is the greatest,” Tsitsipas said, “that has ever held a tennis racket.”

Djokovic was participating in his 33rd major final, Tsitsipas in his second—and the 24-year-old from Greece also lost the other, at the 2021 French Open, to Djokovic.



Novak Djokovic of Serbia kisses the Norman Brookes Challenge Cup after defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece in the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023.

On a cool evening under a cloud-filled sky, and with a soundtrack of chants from supporters of both men prompting repeated pleas for quiet from the chair umpire, Djokovic was superior throughout, especially so in the two tiebreakers.

He took a 4-1 lead in the first, then reeled off the last three points. He led 5-0 in the closing tiebreaker and, when it finished, he pointed to his temple before screaming, a prelude to all of the tears.

“Very emotional for us. Very emotional for him,”

said Djokovic’s coach, Goran Ivanisevic. “It’s a great achievement. It was a really tough three weeks for him. He managed to overcome everything.”

Djokovic acknowledged all of the issues created strain for him.

“It took an enormous amount of mental and emotional energy,” Djokovic said, “to really keep it tight, keep my focus.”

Keep in mind: It’s not as though Tsitsipas played all that poorly, other than a rash of early miscues that seemed

to be more a product of tension than anything. It’s that Djokovic was too unyielding. Too accurate with his strokes, making merely 22 unforced errors, 20 fewer than his foe. Too speedy and flexible on the run (other than when, moving to his left, Djokovic took a tumble).

“I did everything possible,” said Tsitsipas, who also would have moved to No. 1 with a victory, replacing Carlos Alcaraz, who sat out the Australian Open with a leg injury.

Perhaps. Yet Djokovic

## Antetokounmpo scores 50 for Bucks; Pelicans lose 8th in row



**M I L W A U K E E**

(AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo says he wants to keep producing outstanding performances that he can show his kids one day when they’re old enough to appreciate them.

The two-time MVP added one more to the list Sunday night.

Antetokounmpo scored 50 points while playing only 30 minutes as the Milwaukee Bucks rolled to a 135-110 victory over the slumping New Orleans Pelicans. Antetokounmpo shot 20 of 26 from the floor—including 3 of 4 from 3-point range—and 7 of 12 from the foul line.

“They might say, ‘Daddy, you’re boring. You’re lame. We don’t want to see your highlights. We’ve heard so much about you. We want to watch Scooby-Doo’ or whatever the case might be,” Antetokounmpo said. “I’m just going to keep creating the way people in the past created, the way I can go back and watch Magic Johnson highlights, Kevin Garnett highlights,

Kobe Bryant highlights, Allen Iverson highlights, KD’s, LeBron’s. They’ve created so much art throughout the years, and we can go back and see it and admire what they did. Tim Duncan.”

Antetokounmpo’s 50 points were five off the career high he set Jan. 4 in a 123-113 victory over the Washington Wizards.

Jrue Holiday scored 17 and Brook Lopez added 15 for the Bucks, who shot 55.2%.

New Orleans never led and lost its eighth straight. The Pelicans were playing for the second consecutive night—they lost 113-103 at home to the Wizards on Saturday—and were missing their top three scorers.

Zion Williamson hasn’t played since Jan. 2 due to a strained right hamstring. Brandon Ingram (toe injury on left foot) and CJ McCollum (sprained right thumb) also were out Sunday.

Jose Alvarado stepped up to lead the Pelicans with 18 points, while Trey Murphy III and Jonas Valanciunas had 16 each.

“I thought our effort was there,” Pelicans coach Willie Green. “I thought we fought. It just wasn’t enough tonight.”

Even at full strength, the Pelicans would have struggled to slow down Antetokounmpo on a night when he seemingly couldn’t miss.

This marked the 10th time this season that Antetokounmpo has scored at least 40 points, matching the career high he set last year for 40-point games in a single season.

“He made it look easy all night long,” Bucks forward Khris Middleton said. “He’s playing efficient. He’s playing dominant. He’s playing unstoppable. He’s playing like the MVP again. We need that from him every night, and he knows that.”

### HORNETS 122, HEAT 117

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Terry Rozier scored 31 points, P.J. Washington had 27 and Charlotte stopped Miami’s three-game win streak.

LaMelo Ball scored 13

of his 19 points in the fourth quarter as Charlotte improved to 7-16 at home. Gordon Hayward was a perfect 7 of 7 from the field for 20 points.

Rozier also had seven assists and six rebounds. He was 11 for 19 from the field, including a 5-for-11 performance from 3-point range.

Jimmy Butler scored 28 points for Miami, and Tyler Herro had 24.

Charlotte shot 54.2% from the field and outrebounded Miami 47-36.

### GRIZZLIES 112, PACERS 100

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Ja Morant had 27 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds, Jaren Jackson Jr. added 28 points and Memphis overcame a lackluster first half to defeat Indiana.

Brandon Clarke had 13 points, hitting all five of his shots as Memphis snapped a five-game losing streak and ran its home record to 21-3. It was Morant’s fifth triple-double of the season and second in a row.

Benedict Mathurin, the sixth pick in the 2022 draft, led the Pacers with 27 points and eight rebounds. Aaron Nesmith had 16 points and Myles Turner added 15 points.

### CAVALIERS 122, CLIPPERS 99

CLEVELAND (AP)—Cedi Osman tied his career-high with 29 points, Darius Garland had 16 points and 10 assists, and Cleveland led Los Angeles wire-to-wire for a win.

All-Star starter Donovan Mitchell had 11 points in his return for Cleveland after missing three games with a strained groin. Osman, a member of Turkey’s national team, drained all seven 3-point attempts on Turkish Heritage Night.

Brandon Boston Jr. scored 24 points and Moses Brown had 13 points and 16 rebounds for Los Angeles, which had its five-game winning streak snapped. Paul George and Kawhi Leonard didn’t dress for the Clippers because of knee issues and Reggie Jackson didn’t play because of a sore right Achilles.

pushes and pushes and pushes some more, until it’s the opponent who is something less than perfect on one swing, either missing or providing an opening to pounce.

That’s what happened when Tsitsipas held his first break point—which was also a set point—while ahead 5-4 in the second and Djokovic serving at 30-40. Might this be a fulcrum? Might Djokovic relent? Might Tsitsipas surge?

Uh, no.

A 15-stroke point concluded with Djokovic smacking a cross-court forehand winner that felt like a statement. Two misses by Tsitsipas followed: A backhand long, a forehand wide. Those felt like capitulation. Even when Tsitsipas actually did break in the third, Djokovic broke right back.

There has been more than forehands and backhands on Djokovic’s mind over the past two weeks.

There was the not-so-small matter of last year’s legal saga—he has alternately acknowledged the whole thing served as a form of motivation but also said the other day, “I’m over it”—and curiosity about the sort of reception he would get when allowed to enter Australia because pandemic restrictions were eased.

He heard a ton of loud support, but also dealt with some persistent heckling while competing, including applause after faults Sunday.

There was the sore left hamstring that has been heavily bandaged for every match—until the final, that is, when only a single piece of beige athletic tape was visible.

And then there was the matter of his father, Srdjan, being filmed with a group waving Russian flags—one with an image of Vladimir Putin—after Djokovic’s quarterfinal. The tournament banned spectators from carrying flags of Russia or Belarus, saying they would cause disruption because of the ongoing invasion of Ukraine. Djokovic and his father said Srdjan thought he was with Serbian fans.

Still, Srdjan Djokovic did not attend his son’s semifinal or the final.

“We both agreed,” said the younger Djokovic, who did meet up with Dad for a hug after Sunday’s match, “it would probably be better that he is not there.”

No matter all of it, Djokovic excelled—as he so often does.

“It’s been a long journey,” he said, “but a very special one.”

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tearing up of the more mischievous and reprehensible kind occurred at the Cowtown Raceway Track recently when unknown individuals vandalized Marianas Racing Association's container office.

MRA president Charles Cepeda said the estimated damage to the facility was \$1,000.

"The MRA container office was vandalized. Nothing was inside but someone damaged the windows and walls. Nothing was stolen as it was empty. The estimated damage is \$1,000 and we think it happened last Jan. 17," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Cepeda said they didn't bother to report the incident to the Department of Public Safety and, so far, no one has come forward to report the dastardly act.

"No witness... We do have cameras in the area, but it did not capture anything... No one has come forward with any information," he said.

MRA vice president Justis "Cuki" Alvarez said it was truly disappointing that sinister members of the community have nothing better to do than damage someone else's property for no apparent reason.

"It's just another sad case of vandals doing what vandals do. We purchased the container house for officials to converge during races if necessary to discuss matters during the

# Vandals strike anew at Cowtown Race Track



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas Racing Association's container office has been vandalized by unknown individuals recently.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
The vandalism occurred most probably last Jan. 17, according to MRA president Charles Cepeda.

races. Also of course to have a little shade for the scorekeepers to tally scores later in the day after the race."

Alvarez said MRA is also perplexed that someone would break into the **MRA MARIANAS RACING ASSOCIATION** container office when clearly there was nothing inside.

"The container was empty. There was nothing inside and the vandals should have known that because there are windows that you can easily see into and know if anything

was there. But there was nothing to take. So the vandals just decided to break the structure and damage it for virtually no reason," he said.

Alvarez added that MRA is sad and upset that these things continue to happen, "but whoever is doing it obviously isn't worried since Cowtown is in such a remote area and there are no security guards."

He also echoed what Cepeda said that MRA's motion cameras failed to record

anything, which may necessitate a change in equipment.

"We set up a motion camera at the entrance gate. But it didn't catch anything and there are so many other ways to enter from. We hope to invest in more cameras in the future and hopefully catch whoever is doing it."

It's not the first time that vandals struck at the home of Saipan's motocross enthusiasts as in December 2021 perpetrators broke into the track and damaged and destroyed the facility's solar lights.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Damage to the facility is estimated at \$1,000.

## LAHUNN

From Page 20

level competition. I can't wait to be there," said the 13-year-old.

Lam dedicated this latest achievement to his parents, Race, the Oceania Tennis Federation, and all his friends in the CNMI "who have been supporting him tremendously."

As for training in the lead up

to the pre-qualifying competition, Lam said his coaches in Spain, where he's now based, have lined up a busy schedule for him already.

"I'm planning to go to the Valencia Tennis Academy next week in Spain, join their program, and play local tournaments to prepare for the competition," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Chae, for her part, is thankful for being selected to the U14 Pacific Oceania Team for the

pre qualifying tournament.

"I can't expect much from the competition, but I'm sure that I'm going to do my best," said the 13-year-old from Saipan Community School who is dedicating her selection to her parents.

Race, meanwhile, said it's always an honor to be selected by the OTF to captain a regional team.

"It's my first time to be a part of a World Team U14's squad. It's on clay and I know that La-

Hunn likes that surface so I like his chances. Hannah will get a big and exciting learning experience," he said.

Aside from Lam, also part of the Pacific Oceania boys U14 ta, to the tournament are Tahiti's Toanui Lee Tam and Solomon Islands' John Taufunu.

Joining Chae in the girls U14 squad are Papua New Guinea's Colita Hakena and Cook Islands' Raetea Rongo. The girls U14 captain is Raynal Singh from Fiji.

## BUDWEISER

From Page 20

officers, members and volunteers for their great hard work," he said.

The highlight for the year was having a sponsor, Budweiser, which was announced before the start of the season last July. Masaharu also said the other highlights were "finding enough teams, seeing everyone enjoying the games, and getting great reviews for BASA from the teams and spectators. We also had a great turn out for our home run derby where both female and male joined in their division winning great prizes."

Masaharu said because the overall turnout was a success

for BASA last season, they are excited to do more for the community this year.

"There has been an enormous amount of requests to do an open league. We are planning and hoping this year 2023, BASA will be able to have both an open and master's league. Masters can join the open league but under forty can't join the Master's league. And like last season, women can join master's if there are enough women's teams. As soon as we get confirmation from these leagues then we will have a sports calendar ready for all players," he said.

Also, last Jan. 19, BASA, including president Leo Bobai, board member Jonseng Shiprit, secretary Elsie Ngewakl, and board member Hector Efraim showed their appreciation by

donating \$500 to Dandan Middle School, which is adjacent to the field that they played their softball games on. They turned over the check to DMS principal James Sablan.

After their successful year, Masaharu said, "We have reached our goal of giving you all an awesome 2022 season. The fun memories are surely etched in the minds of everyone. We had an awesome time with all players, coaches, managers, BASA officers, and board members."

He then thanked everyone, along with their sponsor, Marianas Pacific or Marpac, for their support to their softball community and said, "We would like to thank each and every one for their endearing commitment and dedication to our grow-

ing softball family. We hope to count on the support of all you for the next coming season. BASA would like to thank our sponsor Marpac for the recent BASA season. We are excited and looking forward to another successful season with them. As a sponsor, their contribution was vital for BASA to complete an important task."

He also thanked the Saipan Mayor's Office for donating their trash trailer every Sunday and thanked all the representatives and individuals that contributed to BASA.

BASA was chartered in 2006. It believes in promoting health and wellness through sports, as well as providing support for various community non-profit organizations with manpower or monetary donations.



LEIGH GASES  
The Queens of Diamonds' first base Thelma Mizer in action during their championship game against the Hot Shots in the Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association last December at the Dandan Softball Field.



**Chiefs top Bengals  
23-20 on last-second kick for AFC title**  
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## LaHunn, Hannah named to Pacific Oceania Team

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**T**he CNMI's LaHunn Lam and Hannah Chae have been selected to be part of the Pacific Oceania Team to the 2023 ITF World Teams Competition Asia/Oceania Pre-Qualifying Events set next month in Sri Lanka.

Aside from Lam and Chae, Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association president and CNMI national tennis coach Jeff Race has also been picked by Oceania Tennis Federation to head the U14 boys team as coach/manager.

"Big congratulations to Hannah Chae and LaHunn Lam.

Based on their finishes in the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships last September they have been selected by the Oceania Tennis Federation to represent the Pacific Oceania Team in the 2023 World Team U14 Pre Qualifying competition. It is very exciting to



The 2023 ITF World Teams Competition Asia/Oceania Pre-Qualifying Events will take place from Feb. 13 to 18 in Sri Lanka's capital of Colombo.

Lam, who last year became the youngest player ever to compete in Wimbledon, said he's honored to represent the CNMI again in an off-island tournament.

"I am very thankful and excited to play in such a high-

See LAHUNN on Page 19



**Lam**



**Chae**

## 'Budweiser BASA had exceptional year'



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belau Amateur Softball Association last year donated \$500 to Dandan Middle School. From Left, BASA president Leo Bobai, BASA board member Jonseng Shiprit, Dandan Middle School vice principal Reo Arriola, BASA secretary Elsie Ngewakl, Dan Dan Middle School principal James Sablanm and BASA board member Hector Efraim.

By LEIGH GASES  
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REPORTER

The Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association had an exceptional 2022, giving it a perfect 10/10 rating from BASA vice president McQueen Masaharu.



16 teams consisting of six women's and 10 men's master's teams joined the master's league.

The Queens of Diamonds won the women's division championship, while Tokahao won the men's division title.

Masaharu also said they had great officers and board members who worked hard to ensure that the league ran smoothly. "We thank all

See BUDWEISER on Page 19

## MHS 2 leads Bracket 1 of HS co-ed badminton

By LEIGH GASES  
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REPORTER

The Marianas High School Dolphins 2 pulled ahead to the lead after defeating their foes in Bracket I on the second day of round-robin games in the co-ed high school Public School System/TakeCare Badminton Interscholastic League held at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Saturday.

The Dolphins first took a stand against Agape Christian School Torchbearers 1 and almost completed the sweep save for two events for a final score of 13-2. They also mirrored the results in their next game against Saipan International School Geckos 1, 13-2.

The Dolphins in the boys doubles and in the girls singles match against the Torchbearers slipped up in one game each for scores of 2-1, which broke their almost perfect sweep of both events.



In the next events, the Dolphins then regained their bearings and swings in order to sweep the boys doubles, girls doubles, and mixed doubles.

In their game against the Geckos, the Dolphins' team of Marlon Bautista, Jan Du-magan, Brandon Manacop, Paulo Quidato, Seiyul Hong, Zhimin Jin, Vianca Mangulabnan, Enmei Quan, and Angeliysha Punzalan almost ended their game day with a sweep, except for falling short in the girls singles, 1-2.

After their successful campaign on game day number 2 and after beating Tinian High School and Grace Christian Academy on the first game day last Jan. 21, the Dolphins lead Bracket I with an overall score of 56.

Behind them in second place is ACS 1 with 44 points, SIS 1 with 35 points, GCA 2 with 33 points, Saipan Southern High School 2 with 15 points, and

See MHS on Page 19



Leigh Gases  
Marianas High School's Kyle Salcedo serves during his game against Agape Christian School in the Public School System/TakeCare Badminton Interscholastic League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.